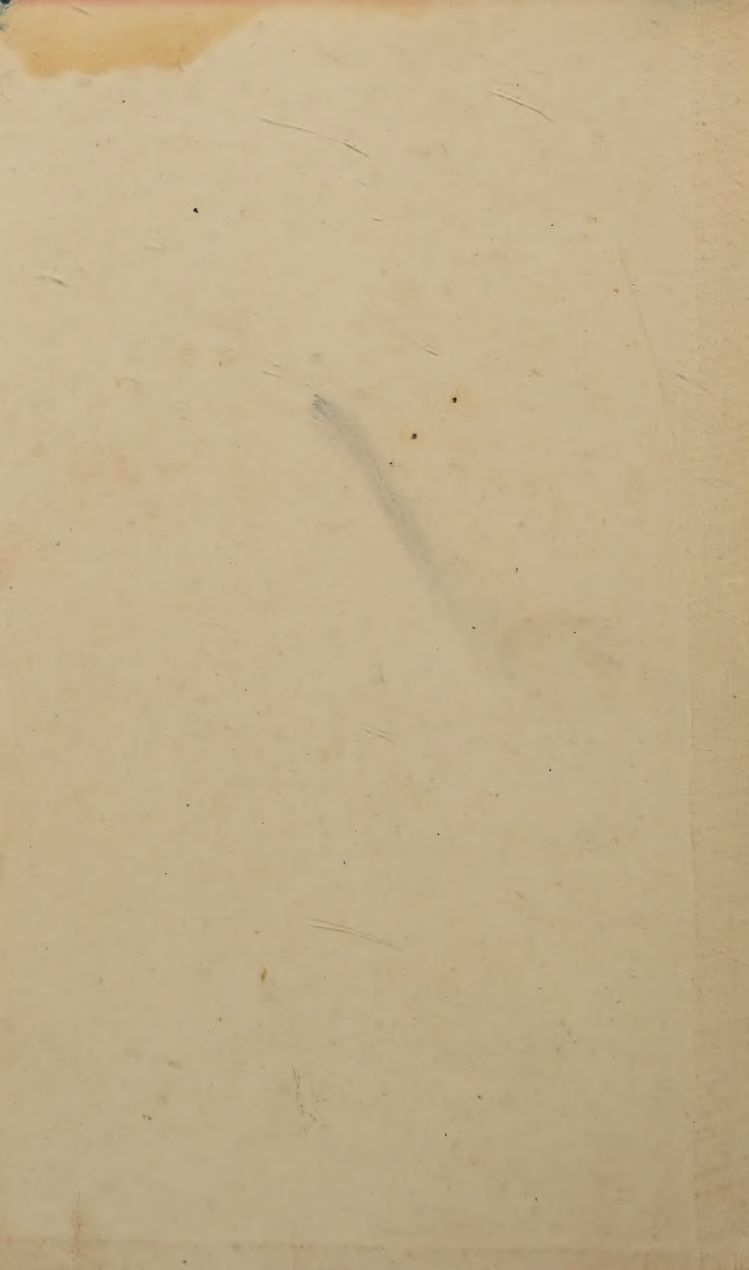


THE WELSH COUNTY SERIES

BRECONSHIRE





S.M.D. Dempster

The Welsh County Series.

THE STORY OF BRECONSHIRE

BY
MATTHEW OWEN.

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

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THIS BOOK IS
DEDICATED
TO THE
HONOURABLE R. C. DEVEREUX
(CHAIRMAN OF THE BRECONSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION
COMMITTEE),
TO WHOM I AM DEEPLY OBLIGATED
FOR HIS
PATRONAGE AND FOR HIS VALUABLE AID
IN THE
FINAL PREPARATION OF THE WORK
FOR THE PRESS.

PREFACE.

THE " Story of Breconshire " is primarily intended to serve as a Reader for the Upper Standards in the Elementary Schools and for the Lower Forms in Secondary Schools ; and its immediate aim is to enable children to acquire an intelligent knowledge of the Geography and History of the County.

The Breconshire Education Committee have approved of the aims and objects of the book from an educational point of view, and have recommended its adoption in the Schools of the County—an honour which the author very sincerely appreciates.

It is my duty and pleasure to express my gratitude to the following for the material assistance given me :—The Sub-Committee appointed (by the Breconshire Education Committee) to revise the proof-sheets, patiently devoted many hours of valuable time to the work. The four members, whose names appear below, and who constituted the Sub-Committee, placed at my disposal their matured judgment and detailed knowledge of the County.

The Hon. R. C. Devereux also contributed most of the chapter on " Hay and Neighbourhood," &c.

Miss G. E. F. Morgan, Mayor of Brecon, encouraged me in the initial stages of the work, and kindly lent me several books from her own library.

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I am indebted to the following for the use of blocks, &c. :—Miss Bevan, Ely Tower; Mrs. Edwin Poole, the Venerable Archdeacon E. L. Bevan, M.A., Rev. T. Howat, B.A., Mr. Edwin Davies, Mr. Evan Jones, Ty'nypant, and others.

Lastly, I beg to convey to my colleagues, the Head Teachers of the Elementary Schools of the County, my sincere thanks for their hearty co-operation and support.

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The Story of Breconshire.

CHAPTER I.

NATURAL FEATURES.

THIS inland county of South Wales is 38 miles long from N. to S., and measures 32 miles from East to West in its widest part. The journey round it along the boundary would be 108 miles. Its area covers 734 sq. miles, or 469,894 acres, and the population of the county is 54,000.

Six counties surround Breconshire. If we follow the boundary line, commencing on the S. and going E. then N., and then W., until we return to our starting point, these counties come in this order: Glamorgan, Monmouth, Hereford, Radnor, Cardigan, and Carmarthen. Although an agricultural county, the greater part of the surface is mountainous, or hilly, but some of the valleys are large and wide, and their slopes give a good area of land to the plough. Farming and coal-mining are the two chief industries. The most populous parts of the county are along the southern borders, where the coal-measures are worked. In other parts the towns are small in size and few in number.

Generally speaking, the surface of the county consists of:—

(a) Two large river basins, those of the Usk and Irfon, separated by the Epynt Mountains.

(b) Two mountainous districts—one in the north and another along the whole of the south of the county.

(c) The Black Mountains in the east of the county extending north and south from Hay to Crickhowell.

(d) Hills in the west bordering Carmarthenshire, of which the Sugar Loaf is the highest point, and through which runs the L. & N.W.R. tunnel, near Llanwrtyd.

The southern half of the county for about thirty miles from west to east, and for about ten miles inland is a mountainous region, deeply marked by valleys opening into Glamorgan and Monmouth. The valley of the Twrch is the limit on the West and Abergavenny on the East.

Let us take a tramp over this part of the county. Leaving Lower Cwmtwrch Valley in the extreme west, we walk about two miles across a more open country through Ystradgynlais and climb to the Railway Station of that name on the Neath & Brecon Railway, just on the borders of Glamorganshire. This is a rapidly-growing colliery district, where the anthracite coal-measures are worked. Looking down this Swansea Valley, we see evident signs of a very populous and thriving district. We are now about twenty miles from the town of Brecon.

In order to get easily to the top of the hilly country, we book to Cray Station. On our way we rise steadily, past rugged valleys, observing on our left, in the far distance, among the craggy mountains, the beautiful mansion of Craig-y-Nos, the home of the renowned Madame Patti. There is nothing attractive in the scenery in this district, for the slopes of the hills are bare and rocky. The chief mining villages within view are Ty'nycoed, Penrhos, Colbren and Onllwyn.

At Cray Station—a place about 1,000 feet above the sea-level—we get out of the train, and, on looking round, find ourselves in a wild mountainous region as far as the

eye can see—except in the direction of Defynock village—which gives us the first view of the pretty Usk Valley. Our first attraction is the splendid Cray Waterworks—the largest yet constructed in the county. These supply the Swansea area with water for domestic purposes. Nothing but hills catches the eye—the chief of the peaks in the distance being the Fangihirych, about 2,500 feet high. Going now due east, across the moors of these hills, we are soon at the head of the romantic and famed Ystradfellte Valleys, and on our left is Fan Nedd, one of the peaks of the Beacons Range. On our way we cross an old Roman road plainly marked on the mountain, and in the distance we notice the interesting big stone called Maen Llia—a relic of Roman times.

We also observe that above the village of Ystradfellte, very large waterworks are in course of construction to supply Neath and Pontypridd. Over the hills in this dreary and lonely spot is seen the unusual sight of a locomotive steaming from Hirwain towards the works.

Continuing our tramp East, over the rugged country, we come upon the Taff Valleys, and find we are just skirting the base of the Beacons on our left. Keeping now slightly to the S.-E. we are on the Llangynidr Mountain—a tableland for about 12 miles, as far as Brynmawr. Suddenly we come upon a most unexpected sight—a lonely, primitive-looking village, in the hollow of an immense quarry. Standing in “Trefil,” as this village is called, you can see only rocks and mountains, which shut you in on all sides. The whole of this tract is an extensive, bare, treeless, limestone region. Twynau Gwynion (white peaks) are important limestone quarries, which stand out prominently above the valley of the Taf Fechan. To-day, however, no sound of a hammer is heard, where, about 20 years ago, the thud of the quarrymen’s sledges was deafening, and the blasting shook

the region for miles around. The Rhymney Iron Works were then in full blaze, and the furnaces were fed from the quarries. Those works lie now in ruins.

The L. & N.W.Ry. travels over the district, from Cefn to Brynmawr, and from the train the passenger on one side sees populous mining towns, with the smoke of ironworks and collieries; while on the other side appears a dreary level mountain land.

From Brynmawr, where this tableland ends abruptly, we look down into the steep and rugged Clydach Valley, while in the distance appears the beautiful Vale of Crickhowell.

CHAPTER II.

THE MOUNTAINS OF THE COUNTY.

THE BEACONS (Y BANNAU).

This range of mountains extends E. and W. in the parishes of St. David and Cantref for about 14 miles. On the N. side they overlook the Valley of the Usk, with Brecon, the county town, nestling on the bank of that river. This mountain range is composed of the old red sandstone. The southern slopes are quite bare of trees, and gently shelve down into the valleys below. The northern slopes are most precipitous, and woods, copses, and good farm lands cover the base, which extends along the bank of the Usk.

A traveller, well acquainted with mountain scenery, says of these mountains : " There scarcely exists a more graceful group of heights ; and their form is equal to, if not grander than, the famous heights in the Lake District of England, or those of North Wales."

The Beacons are the highest mountains in South Wales. The view from the top well repays the task of climbing ; for, if the air be clear, you will see down to the Bristol Channel, and over into 13 or 14 counties. The four chief peaks are : Y Fan Big (Big—peak), 2,300ft. ; Cribyn, 2,608ft. ; Pen-y-Fan, 2,905ft. ; and the Fan Corn Du (Black Horn), 2,863ft. These, especially the last three peaks, are well marked, and stand out boldly against the sky in a sublime view from Brecon town.

Two appear like perfect cones with very pointed and pretty summits. The middle of the three peaks just referred to, and known as Pen-y-Fan, has a terrific precipice of about 200 feet on its north side. The other peaks, although not quite so abrupt, are very steep and equally grand.

There is a very distinct "pass" over the Beacons—a great gap called "Bwlch-y-Fan"—between the Fan Corn Du and Pen-y-Fan.

In the hollow on the north side of Pen-y-Fan is a pool of water, about one mile in circumference, called Llyn Cwm Llŵch (the Lake of Llŵch Dingle). It is also called Pwll-y-Doctor (the doctor's pool), after the famous scholar Dr. David John Rhys, who lived for some years in a farmhouse just below.

The common newt, a pretty lizard, is found in great abundance in this pool. The deep hollow in which the pool is situated is called Arthur's Seat (Cadair Arthur). It is said that the bell-ropes from Llanfaes Church, Brecon, tied together, could not reach the bottom of the pool; and another story states that a goose disappeared on this pool and came out at Llangorse Lake.

The Beacons Range forms a grand gathering ground for the reservoirs of the Cantref Waterworks that supply Cardiff, and those of the Merthyr Tydfil Waterworks, and also the Neath and Pontypridd Waterworks in the Ystradfellte Valleys.

On the south of the Beacons the following rivers rise: Tâf Fawr (Great Taff), Tâf Fechan (Little Taff), Nedd, Mellte, Llia, Pyrddin, Hepste, and the Cynon. On the north the Tarrell and Aber.

These mountains are continued to the west in the county under the name of Forest Fawr—overlooking the Defynock

district. The Fan Mountain, on the borders of Carmarthen, where the Usk rises, is one of the most prominent peaks.

MYNYDDAU EPYNT (THE EPYNT MOUNTAINS).

The Epynt Mountains, together with Mynydd Bwlch-y-Groes, extend across the middle of the County from East to West : thus forming the watershed between the basis of the Usk and Irfon.

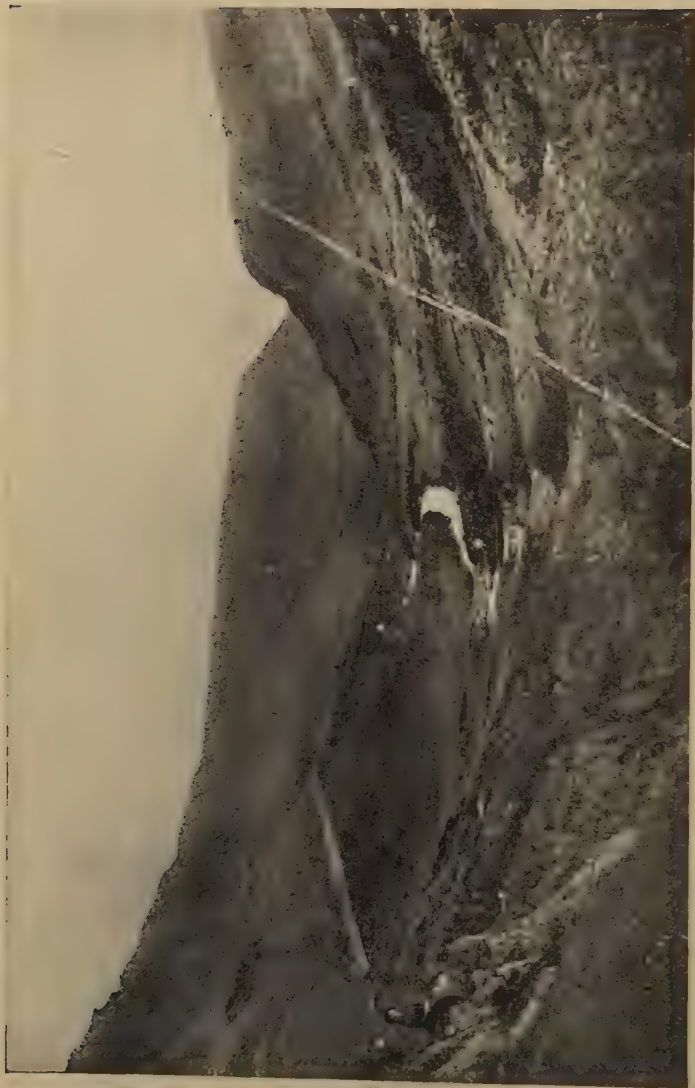
They also separate the Hundred of Builth from the rest of the county. They do not reach the height of the Beacons, but on the whole they are a more interesting range.

The north slopes are generally bare, desolate and boggy, varied, however, by beautiful plots of green and wooded country. The view from the top is very fine ; northwards into the Vale of Irfon, and southwards into the Vale of Usk. The parish of Llangammarch, which skirts the base and slopes of the range, can boast of being connected with five eminent men of the county : John Penry, James Howell, Thomas Howell, Theophilus Evans, and Theophilus Jones. The streams on the north side are the Cammarch, Whefri and Dulais ; while the Brân, Yscir, and Honddu drain the southern slopes.

The highest point in the range is Moelfre, 1,446ft. high, about 2 miles from Builth.

THE ABERGWESYN MOUNTAINS OR HILLS.

This is the wildest and most hilly part of the county, extending from Llanwrtyd to Abergwesyn village, and northwards to Llanwrthwl. Hills, vales, rocks, gorges, woods, and torrents make up the area, and the tourist can here get a taste of mountain climbing. The Irfon basin, in its upper



ABERGWE SYN PASS.

part, is a network of glens, rugged and narrow; here and there the craggy hill thrusts itself into the valley as if to defy the stream to pass its base.

From one of the peaks overlooking the Irfon, there appears an endless series of valleys and rocks all around. The small mountain sheep, with a few scattered farm-houses, are about the only objects to vary the view of stone, furze and fern. The chief peaks here are the Carcwm, Vol, Garn, Pen-Dinas, and Drygarn (The Druid's Cairn), the highest of which is over 2,000ft. The silence and solitude of these parts are such that if one could realise a lovely resting place, he would like to have his grave in one of those silent spots—where the world's bustle and din have never disturbed the awful silence of the place.

THE BLACK MOUNTAINS.

This range of mountains lies in the east of the county, and its two spurs run, one from Hay to Crickhowell, and the other from Talgarth to Bwlch. The Vale of Cwmdru separates them. Entering the county from Hereford, along the banks of the Wye and passing Hay, we observe this range with its dark heathery summits rising here and there above the beautifully green country around. Although the height of the highest point in this part of the range is 2,500 feet only, yet the mountain has an imposing appearance.

The gorges are deep and sombre. Grouse are plentiful on these silent hills, which are covered with such extensive tracts of heather. Here and there the red sandstone thrusts itself to the surface in sharp contrast to the green slopes.

CHAPTER III.

THE RIVERS OF THE COUNTY.

The rivers of the county give us its finest scenery, the chief of which are the Wye, Usk, and Irfon; together with the following, that flow at last into the Bristol Channel:—

Tawe, with its tributaries, the Llywell and Llech.

Nedd Fechan (Little Neath).

Mellte, with its feeders: Llia, Tringarth, Hepste, Sychryd, and Pyrddin.

Tâf Fawr, with its feeders: Cryw, Llysieuog, and Car.

Tâf Fechan, with its tributary, the Glais.

Rhymney, Howy, Ebbw, all rising in the Llangynidr Mountain, flow through Monmouthshire into the Bristol Channel.

THE USK—THE COUNTY RIVER.

This beautiful river rises in the extreme west of the county, in the Fan Mountain, on the borders of Carmarthenshire; and after flowing East as far as the county town, turns S.E. through the pretty Vale of Crickhowell, finally leaving the county at Abergavenny, after a course of 46 miles.

Its chief tributaries on the left bank are: Clydach, Cilieni, Brân, Yscir, Honddu, Grwyne Fechan. On the right bank: Hydfer, Cray, Treweren, Senni, Camlais, Tarrell, Mehascin, Aber, Crawnon, Clydach (near Brynmawr).

The following places are on its banks: Rhyd-y-briw, Defynock, Senny Bridge, Aberyscir, Brecon, Llanhamlach,



USK BRIDGE AND CASTLE, BRECON.

Pencelli, Talybont, Llangynidr, Crickhowell, Llangattock, and Llangrwyney.

In the watershed of the river are also Trecastle, Llandeilo Fan, Trallong, Llanfihangel Nantbrân, Merthyr Cynog, Battle, Llanspyddid, Llanfrynach, Garthbrengy, Llanddew, and Talachddu.

For the first 15 miles of its course, it winds through a very hilly and wooded district, affording pretty and shady nooks covered with trees. The view, although not extensive, is still one of rare rural beauty—especially in the Defynock district, which is so hilly and so thickly wooded. Here, at an elevation on its left bank, is seen Trecastle, while on its right bank stand the pretty villages of Senny Bridge and Defynock. We can easily understand from the abundance of trees and foliage, that this district formed a part of the once famous Great Forest of Defynock and Castell Du (Black Castle). This old castle, a fortress of Norman times, was the residence of the governor of the forest, a companion of Bernard Newmarch.

It was then used also as a prison, or keep, where the mountain robbers were confined when caught pillaging the lands around. Henry IV. stayed at this castle in 1405, and issued an order offering pardon to all who had taken part in the insurrection of Owen Glyndwr against the King.

The lofty hills around Defynock, which stretch for miles away, afford excellent sheepwalks—thousands of sheep being pastured here. Breconshire rears the largest number of sheep of any county in Wales. There are two annual sales held near Senny Bridge, where 5,000 to 6,000 sheep change hands. Farmers from all parts of the country attend, and it is an interesting sight to witness the smart way in which the work is carried on. These “sales” are the most important events in the quiet life of this rural spot.

The Usk, after skirting the base of the high meadow land on whose summit stands Trecastle, flows eastward through a more open country towards Brecon.

Two Roman roads—one from Brecon to Carmarthen, and another the Sarn Helen, which comes over the hill from Ystradfellte to Brecon—pass through the Vale of the Usk in the parish of Defynock. The county road and the Neath and Brecon Railway run along the valley, and afford the traveller a splendid view of the banks and slopes of the river.

As the Usk approaches the town of Brecon, there is a more open view of the rich farm lands on each side. The Fennifach Rocks and Newton Pool are favourite spots with pleasure-seekers in summer. Passing the county town, which stands on rising ground on its left bank, the Usk takes a southerly direction towards Llanfrynach and Talybont. The historic Cantref Church, nestling in the fine tall trees, is close by, and near the village of Llanfrynach were the remains of a large Roman villa. About a mile below, on the right bank of the river, and on a height, are the ruins of Pencelli Castle. This district is rich in historic lore of old times.

The river now flows through the fine grounds of Buckland Villa, and skirts the base of the wooded Bwlch Hill on the left bank; while to the right, stand the majestic Llangynidr Hills, dressed in their garb of the beautiful green foliage of the trees which cover them.

The charming Vale of Crickhowell comes now into full view, and Glanusk Park, one of the most stately mansions of the county, stands on the right bank of the river a few miles below the village of Llangynidr. For some miles the Usk flows through the fine grounds of Glanusk—which altogether present a picture of unsurpassed beauty. Below the park stand two very pretty places opposite each other, Crick-

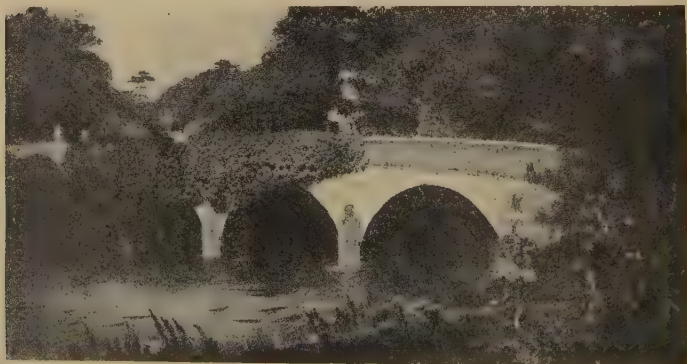
howell on the left bank, and Llangattock on the right. For six miles from here, the course of the river is almost due south, until it reaches Abergavenny on the borders of Monmouthshire.

Anglers find splendid sport and are pleasure along this river, for trout and salmon are abundant. Most parts of the Usk are preserved.

A tour along the Usk from its source to Abergavenny will give us a view of the two ranges of mountains in the county—called the Beacons and the Epynt—while the Vale of Crickhowell will show us the lofty hills on each side, and up as far as the Bwlch Pass.

THE RIVER IRFON.

The source of this river is in the wildest part of the county, in the Abergwesyn Mountains, which lie in the extreme N.W., bordering on Cardiganshire. The Towy also rises in that neighbourhood.



IRFON BRIDGE, BUILTH WELLS.

The Irfon is a mountain torrent here, and it has scooped

out for itself a path through the rocky glen, whose sides are bleak, craggy, and bare. Visitors to Llanwrtyd generally visit this part of the river's course, to see one of the grandest sights of its kind in the whole county. The river has tun-nelled its way through the slate rocks, scooping them into huge cauldrons, in which the water boils and rages in foam as if angry at the hindrance put in its way. During a flood, the Wolf's Leap is really a sight not to be forgotten, as the terrible hollow roar, and its foaming waters, make one creep with fear. About two miles from its source, the river reaches Abergwesyn, a lonely village at the junction of the Gwesyn with the Irfon.

Anglers and sportsmen put up in the Grouse Inn during the season, but apart from the "char-a-bancs" from Llanwrtyd during the summer months, there is nothing much to disturb the painful silence of this desolate and lonely spot—for doubtless this is one of the most solitary and cheerless spots any traveller could see. If solitude has its charms, then those will certainly be enjoyed here.

The Irfon, for the next five miles of its course, appears to dodge the lofty hills, for, in some places, the glen is so narrow that the road and river can with difficulty get through. At last, after miles of trailing like a serpent, and after washing the feet of the oak-encircled Peak of Dinas, it enters a wider valley near Llanwrtyd Church. The Henog Brook, another child of the craggy glens, joins it here.

Just opposite the church, high on the left bank, and surrounded by trees, stands Glenview, at one time the home of the late Rev. J. Kilsby Jones, the "Llanwrtyd philosopher," as he was called. A white-washed house, called Dinas, stands near the church. This house has become famous in history from the fact that it was the home of John Lloyd—a descendant of Elystan Glodrydd, the Welsh chieftain.

One member of this family, also called John Lloyd, late of Dinas Brecon, was a distinguished scholar and poet. He cherished very sacred memories of the Old Home of his Ancestors, and in the following lines describes the spot :—

" Home of my fathers Dinas, hail once more
 Though far removed in Irfon's lonely glen,
 Girdled by crâggy rocks and mountains hoar
 Gladly I turn to gaze on these again.

For I was taught to love thee from my birth
 By one who deemed thee loveliest, though his eye
 Had dwelt on many a fairer scene of earth,
 And tracked the splendour of an eastern sky."

The Irfon's banks below, show signs of man's effort to change the face of rugged nature, in the pretty grounds around the popular sulphur springs on both banks of the river. In summer, the place is teeming with visitors, some coming for pleasure and some for health.

Flowing through the village, the Irfon now leaves the glens and, turning to the East, enjoys greater freedom and flows leisurely through a wide valley for about 12 miles, and at last empties its waters into the beautiful Wye a little distance above the town of Builth. The L. & N.W.Ry. runs parallel with it from Llanwrtyd; so that a passenger gets a full view of this pretty vale, with the Epynt Hills on one side, and a gentle rising ground on the other, well cultivated and pastured. Several famous mansions are also in view.

The chief tributaries of the Irfon on its left banks are the Cerdin, Cammarch, Dulais, and Whefri.

On the Epynt slopes, about two miles from Llangammarch village, stands the old farmhouse of Cefn Brith, the birthplace of John Penry, the Welsh martyr.

The Welsh Spa, Llangammarch, and the villages of Cefn Gorwydd and Garth, are in the basin of the Irfon.

The Irfon, after passing the pretty ground with the lake

on Abernant Farm, near Llanwrtyd Station, flows for some distance through a tame country with peaty soil. As it, however, approaches Llangammarch village, its banks become thickly covered with trees, which add to the beauty of this crystal stream. No finer stream for the angler can be had in the whole county.

Perhaps the Irfon is, to the Cymro, the saddest of the county rivers, for on its banks, near Builth, was lost his country's independence in the death of Prince Llewelyn. After a course of 20 miles it flows into the Wye.

THE RIVER WYE.

Breconshire claims this river as a part of its eastern boundary, from near Llanwrthwl to the town of Hay, on the borders of Herefordshire. For nearly the whole of this distance the Cambrian Railway follows the river, and no one who has travelled in summer along this route will easily forget the charming scenery along the banks of this fine river.

Its clear waters, its winding haunts, shaded by some of nature's finest trees, with its deep pools and romantic rocks, combine to make it an attractive place for artists and tourists.

Its chief tributaries on the right bank in this county are : The Elan, Irfon, Duhonw and Llyfni. The following places are on its banks : Llanwrthwl, Builth, Erwood, Llyswen, Glasbury, and Hay.

The Wye Valley, which opens wide between Hay and Hereford, is a splendid entry to South Wales from the southern English counties. The railway will also serve the purpose.

Starting our tour up the river at Hay we have before us about thirty-six miles of perhaps the most beautiful scenery

of Welsh rivers. Although the scenery from Ross to Chepstow is very fine along the Wye, we think that the distance before us is still more beautiful.

This river has more high class scenery than any river in England or Wales, and of its two sections the Upper Wye is better than the Lower Wye. The Welsh border is marked by a sudden growth in the size and boldness of the hills and a louder note in the music of its streams.

We enter the county from Herefordshire crossing a small brook called the Dulais, which flows into the Wye near Hay Station. There must have been in early times a ford at this border town, or Hay would not have been in existence. The river at this spot spreads over a wider bed and the waters ripple pleasantly over it. As Berwick was to England and Scotland, so was this town to England and Wales.

The old historic castle, which was necessary to preserve peace, has disappeared, except the gateway, and was rebuilt in Tudor style by Howel Gwyn of Trecastle, and is inhabited to this day. We leave Hay and make our way along the Brecon bank of the river to Glasbury, three miles away. In the distance on the Radnorshire side is Maesllwch Castle, owned by the De Wintons, and built a century ago.

Glasbury is a neat old-fashioned country village, and its orchards and tall poplar trees make it a charming sight. It is the birthplace of the family of Vaughan Morgan, the best known members of which are **Sir Walter Vaughan Morgan, Bart.**, Lord Mayor of London, 1905-6, whose visit to Brecon, as President of the Breconshire Agricultural Show, in the latter year, will be remembered by many—and the late Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan, M.P. for Battersea, from 1885 to 1892.

This family formerly carried on a large business as wool merchants at Treble Hill, in Glasbury, and at Pipton, an adjoining village, but, like Dick Whittington of old, they found the call to London irresistible, and with the same result in the case of the older brother.

The Wye has already passed through level, broad pasture lands, but its course is now impeded by the hills of Breconshire, which seem to come right across its path. Close by, is the railway junction, "Three Cocks," on the Cambrian Railway. In summer this spot is charming, and no passenger will complain of an hour's waiting, for nature's music in the song of the birds and in the pleasant murmur of the waters must charm any listener.

The well-known inn stands close by, with its fine collection of chimney stacks, above its brown stone roof. Its display of windows in the L shaped front, completes a striking building in the landscape. Before the railway junction existed the road travellers in the old coaching days made this inn their halting-place. In autumn shooting parties meet here, and anglers, in summer, come from afar to enjoy the sport on the river. The Black Mountains and the Wye attract many only to enjoy the beauties of nature in this district.

The salmon-fisher, since the owners of nets have been bought out, has in the Wye a river second to none in the kingdom for his favourite sport. Times are changed since a writer spoke thus of the spot :—

"The few people who come here for rest and quiet, keep on coming till they die or are paralysed. The incident of the three old anglers is known far beyond the Wye Valley, and is quite a pathetic once. It is merely the case of three friends, salmon-fishers, who foregathered here every season.

from comparative youth, till one by one they died off in old age. I am wrong ! One at this moment survives, and still haunts the spot, but can no longer wield a rod, which is indeed the climax of a pathetic story."

The Wye, near Three Cocks, turns sharp to the north, and from there, as far as Rhayader (just beyond the boundary of Breconshire), it flows in a north-westerly direction. On the left bank of the river are the two mansions of Tregoyd and Gwernyfed.

Tregoyd was destroyed by fire some years ago, but was rebuilt. It is the seat of the Hereford family. Gwernyfed is an old Tudor house, where Charles I. stopped when travelling through the county. Another mansion is the Dderw, with its long, many gabled front and huge outbuildings.

Continuing our tour along the Wye we soon pass the village of Llyswen, and the hills begin to close in around us. Woods reach down to the water's edge, and the roaring of the river, owing to its rocky and narrow channels, is now much louder. Boughrood is reached, and we observe that "fishing-boxes" are more numerous than castles. Llangoed, the residence of H. A. Christy, Esq., is situated in a beautiful slope, with its woods and meadows forming a pretty landscape reaching far up the hillside.

Dr. Malkin, when passing this spot, said : "Those who knew the Wye only about Tintern did not know the Wye at all," and he was surely right.

Builth is now only eight miles away, on the Brecon side of the river. Erwood is also in view, while the famous Erwood Rocks rise prominently on the Radnor side opposite to the village. They are reached from Erwood by a bridge.

At this spot, the waters of the river often rise so suddenly, owing to the rain falling on the hills in the distance, that

fishermen wading in the water have been unable to get ashore before the current overtakes them and they have been drowned.

It is said that there are but four letters in nature's alphabet—"wood, water, mountain, and ground, but each of a thousand indescribable moods," and we get fine samples of them along the banks of the Wye, especially around Erwood. In sauntering along the lovely Wyeseid, from Three Cocks to Builth, we can say that the pheasant, salmon, and rabbit, and those concerned in some way or other with them, were the chief objects to be noticed.

The road may be lonely, but our constant and amusing companion—the beautiful Wye—is always with us. Here, too, the story of Llewelyn's last ride can be realised.

The Wye Valley, at Aberedw, again opens out before us. The hills recede to give room to another picture of rare beauty as we approach the pretty town of Builth in the distance. If we are fortunate enough to be out on a day when the otter-hunting parties are on the river, we shall enjoy a very interesting pastime, for this neighbourhood is a great centre for the sport.

In the neighbourhood of Builth, the Wye goes noisily down for nearly a mile in those rapids, famous in the salmon-fishing world as Builth Rocks. Passing next Builth Road Junction, the road from here to Rhayader, twelve miles away, follows the river closely.

The river next passes through the beautiful grounds of Llys dinam, the residence of C. D. Venables Llewelyn, Esq.; opposite, on the Radnorshire side, being the village of New-bridge-on-Wye, and some four miles higher up, also on the Radnorshire side, the woodlands of Doldowlod come

into full view. There is here a strip of velvety parklands, closed in by overhanging trees and woods, and surrounded by mighty hills—a veritable abode of peace. In this spot dwelt “Watt, of steam-engine fame,” the disturber of the world’s peace.

Near the fall of the Elan into the Wye, there are about ten square miles of land between the north of Breconshire and the south of Montgomeryshire, which can be considered as giving us some of the most beautiful scenery in Wales.

We have now come to the end of our tour at Llanwrthwl, and must therefore leave the Wye from here to its source at Plinlymon.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GEOLOGY OF THE COUNTY.

The lower Silurian Rocks compose a large area of the county in the N.-W., while the district around Builth, and that extending to the S.-W. of it, is composed of the upper Silurian Rocks. The Silurian Rocks are those next below the red sandstone in the crust of the earth.

More than half its area, across the middle of the county, is composed of the old red sandstone. Along the southern border of this tract we find carboniferous limestone and shale; and adjoining this again are the coal-measures, which extend into the great coalfield of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan. Limestone is scarce in the Silurian regions.

Quarries of excellent Silica sand are found in the parishes of Penderyn and Ystradfellte. Pennant stone (used instead of slates for roofing) is found in the northern parts of the county. Limestone, coal, and iron are worked in the South. The Abercriban Quarries at Ponsticill supply excellent metal for road-making.

MARKET TOWNS, MANSIONS, &c.

The market towns are Brecon, Builth, Crickhowell, Brynmawr, Talgarth, Hay, and Erwood.

Among the mansions the chief are Brecon Priory, Dinas, Buckland, Llangoed Castle, Glanusk, Gwernynyfed, Ynyscedwyn, Penpont, Penoyre, Abercamlais, Peterstone, Maesderwen, Treberfydd, Ffrwdgrech, Castle Madoc, Glanhonddu,

Garth, Llysdimam Hall, Hay Castle, Tregoyd, Tregunter, and Llan-Thomas.

The county is governed by a Lord Lieutenant, a High Sheriff, a Chairman of Quarter Sessions, and a County Council of about sixty members.

CHAPTER V.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE COUNTY.

The first name given to the county was Garthmadryn, an old British word, made up of Garth, a hilly district, and madryn a fox. The word thus means fox-hill, or fox-hold—this animal being found here in large numbers. There was a time, when it was peopled scantily, and its surface thickly covered with forests. Long before the Romans came to this country, there were people living in this island of ours; and, from the marks they left behind, we conclude that they were different tribes confined to certain districts, which they claimed as their own.

These ancient peoples, called generally Celts, or Britons, came from the East, crossing Europe, and into this island. They were two nations—following one another—the Iberians, driven before them by the Celts. The Britons belonged, perhaps, more especially to the latter.

The Iberian was short, dark, and long-skulled, and as he had only arrow-heads, axes and flint knives, he could not fight with the Celt with his bronze and iron weapons.

But the Celt had other advantages over his neighbour, for he was a mighty hunter, a conqueror, and of tall stature. The

little Iberian could not, therefore, hope to match him. At the end of their struggles however, the two peoples settled down peacefully side by side to live by hunting, fishing, and simple farming.

Wales, in these early times, was divided into four parts, Gwynedd, or the Snowdon district; Powys, the Berwyn district; Dyfed, the Plinlymon district; Morganwg and Gwent, the Black Mountains district. This last division included our county.

The two great nations spoken of, the Iberians and the Celts, had spread over these four districts as different tribes, under different names: those living in Garthmadryn being known as the Silures.

Although we have very little written history of our forefathers, still there are traces of them remaining to-day which tell us a great deal about the habits, customs, and mode of living; and here we begin to interest ourselves with the story of our district, long afterwards called a county. It must not be forgotten that we are now about to describe the period long before a Roman soldier, with his eagle standard, ever trod on this island.

These Britons were without laws, parliament or towns, and lived the life of hunters, making very rude dwellings, and clothing themselves in the skins of the animals, that had prowled in the forests. Their food was coarse, and their habits rough. They have left behind them historical remains in the cromlech, dolmen, barrow, camp, caer and crannoge, which are to-day to be seen in our country.

THE CROMLECH, OR DOLMEN.

These Cromlechs are large stones fixed upright in the earth, supporting another placed as a capstone over them.

About threequarters of a mile from Crickhowell, near the turnpike road to Brecon, there stood the finest in the county, but some gentlemen, in their curiosity to explore, have de-



CROMLECH.

stroyed it. The capstone was 14 feet long, and 18 inches thick, standing on four large upright stones. Teams of strong horses had to be got to pull them out, and, after doing so, nothing of interest was found in the ground.

There is also one in a field called Croesllechau, near Talgarth; another at Glanyrafon, near Crickhowell, and a third on the Manest Court Farm, near Brecon, called Ty-Illtyd, in the parish of Llanhamlach, near Llansantffread. This cromlech consists of three stones pitched upright, which support the slanting stone.

“Meini'r Pedair Gawres” (“The Stones of the Four Giantesses”), now forming part of a boundary wall of a sheep-fold, consist of seven large stones in the form of a cluster of stars called the Plough. They are to be seen on the mountain in the parish of Defynock. In the same parish

are druidical remains, called "Cerrig Duon" ("Black Stones") fixed in the ground in the form of a circle—one stone being much larger than the rest.

A very large burial mound, 45yds. long, 20yds. wide, and 4yds. high, stands near Talgarth, and near Tredwstan Court there is another, which was cut through by the construction of the railway. This contained human bones and bronze implements.

In a field near Llanwrttyd stands also a large Cromlech stone.

These Cromlechs were either burial places or temples of the Druids for worship. Some great Druid priest, or some famous warrior, was probably buried in them. The Silures, no doubt, practised the religion of the Druids.

ANCIENT CAMPS AND GAERS.

The most famous British camp in the county is that in Benni Wood, about 2 miles north-west of Brecon, and it was a famous spot to the Britons of the neighbourhood. Here the Druids met and carried out their duties as lawyers, priests and judges of the people. It was a noted meeting place for great occasions, when important matters were carried on.

The word *Caer*—plural, *Caerau*—means a place surrounded by a ditch, fence, or wall. These were generally fixed on the top of a hill for safety—the hill-top being called *ban*, plu, *bannau*. Hence the word *Caerbannau* means the fort on the hills. Near to this the Romans afterwards erected their camp. The word *Benni* comes from the Latin word *bannium*, a hill-top.

A FAMOUS BATTLEFIELD.

"Glywide," or "Clywdi," properly, "A glywi di?"

("Dost thou hear?"), is the name of a house in the furthest part of the Corporation of Brecon, westward, in Old Port Superior Ward, where, it is said, Prince Rhys lay encamped before the famous battle referred to above.

"A glywi di?" ("Dost thou hear?") was Rhys' watchword. Then we see that there were three British camps about the same spot: Coed-y-Fenni, Pen-y-Crug, and Twyn-y-Gaer.

Other British camps are seen near Crickhowell, Glasbury, Talgarth, Castell Dinas and on a hill near Beulah.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CRANNOGE OF LLANGORSE.

In many respects, this is the most interesting of all the pre-historic remains in the county; and we are indebted to the Rev. E. N. Dumbleton, M.A., for exploring the lake in 1867, and giving us valuable information about it.

Within a short distance of the low shore, on the north end of the lake, is a small island, nearly square in shape and about ninety yards round, now covered with trees and brushwood.

A crannoge is a rude lake dwelling, made by the early races of our country. A site on the lake was chosen for the sake of safety from wild animals and robbers that might attack them. It was not easy for these ancient people to construct such a dwelling, for they had no tools but rude stone axes to cut trees, in order to get poles to drive down through the water for a foundation.

These piles, about 60 in number, show signs of rude hacking—just like a schoolboy with a blunt knife chipping a

stick—and are arranged in two or three circular rows. Between these, wickerwork and branches, heaps of stones, mud and earth, were put so as to make the whole secure. The branches would keep the stones from sinking into the marl below. The tops of the piles, were a few feet above the surface of the water, and on these was then built their wooden hut, or dwelling.

Bones of the horse, pig, wild boar, and red deer, and fragments of pottery and a stone, bearing marks of tools on it, were found on the island, all of which prove that at one time there was here a human dwelling. It is very likely that the surface of the lake was lower then, than it is now.

Mr. Dumbleton is also strongly of opinion that there is a sunken city, perhaps Loventium, beneath the lake, and the time may yet come when this will be proved beyond any doubt whatever.

Perhaps one proof of this, is the fact that all the high roads from every part of the district lead to this spot. Whether this city ever existed or not, there is something unusual in the legends that have lived through many generations—legends which are considered of much value by some of the best scholars of the day. But first let us describe the lake.

Llynsafaddan, or Llangorse Lake, as it is called, is the largest sheet of water in South Wales, and lies in a hollow about 6 miles south-east from the town of Brecon. The country around is exceedingly pleasing and pretty. On the east of the lake the hills of Llangorse rise, with the peak called Mynydd Troed, forming the north end. Looking past this we see the Black Mountains, and the fine country around Talgarth. The hilly slopes of these and other hills are dotted with well-tilled farms. Directly to the south of the lake, and as it were guarding the placid waters at its foot,

stands boldly the rounded hill called the Allt. The River Llyfni, which rises in the hills to the south, flows past the ancient Blaenllyfni Castle and the pretty church of Llangasty-Tallyllyn, nestling in the trees; and after passing right through the lake the river flows out at the other end, and joins the Wye at Glasbury. The north and east edges of the lake cannot be approached owing to the marshes and tall reeds growing there. Moor-hens, coots, and wild fowl find in them a favourite abode.

The lake is two miles long, one broad, and a walk around it would mean five miles. Its shores are flat and swampy, while its depth is anything from nine feet to thirty-six feet in its deepest part.

Pleasure parties enjoy boating and fishing here, for there is an abundance of large fish, pike, perch, and eels, which are generally caught by the ordinary schoolboy's tackle—a hook with a worm as bait. The bottom is a yellowish slimy mud: the pole pushing the boat, leaves behind it a long white track like lime.

In winter, when the frost breaks up, the cracking of the ice sounds almost like thunder, and can be heard a long way off. Pike, weighing from 30 to 40 lb. have been taken in the lake, but they are not of a very delicate taste.

THE LEGENDS OF LLANGORSE.

No account of this neighbourhood and lake, would be complete without the legends, that have come down from very early times.

The great Giraldus Cambrensis, writing in the 12th century, tells us how the natives believed that if the rightful king of Wales should be deposed, the usurper would be punished by God. The following event seemed to them to confirm their belief.

When Gruffydd, son of Rhys Ap Tewdwr, together with Milo (Lord of Brecon), the king's secretary, on their return from the Court of Henry I., were passing the lake, the wild fowl of various kinds attracted their attention. "It is an ancient saying in Wales that if the national prince of the country shall order the birds to sing, they will at once obey him," said Milo to those standing round him; and, being curious to test the story, he himself commanded the birds to sing, but in vain. His friend Gruffydd, dismounting and falling on his knees, prayed devoutly to God in these words: "Almighty God, who knowest all things, declare here this day Thy power. If thou hast caused me to descend from the national princes of Cambria, I command these birds in Thy name to declare it." And at once the birds in flocks beat the water with their wings, and proclaimed Gruffydd a true son of Gwalia's princes.

"The Old Woman of Llangorse will grip you," was the threat that parents hurled at the disobedient boy who, against his mother's wish, would go in a boat on the lake. The old woman sat upon the vane of the steeple of the buried church, and would in a pitiful voice invite the child to herself. Then the child would disappear with the old mother for ever beneath its waters.

Another legend says that the spot now covered by the lake was once a beautiful valley with the Llyfni flowing through to join the Wye. On its left bank stood the Church of Llangasty, and on the other side stood the fortified palace of a prince, who feared not God nor respected man, and who scorned religion and hated everything beautiful and good.

Just outside the walls of the grounds stood a fine city. This prince had an only son, who, however, was taken seriously ill, and died. This sad event, instead of softening the father's heart, made him still more sinful. Even on the

night following the funeral of his son, he was merry in a feast of riot, revelry and drunkenness. While the whole company was in the frenzy of this awful scene, the anger of God hovered over the whole place, as in the case of King Belshazzar of Babylon. The thunder crashed and roared terribly, the earth heaved and, falling again, split in two. The merry party and the palace were doomed. Up through the gap waters rushed, and in its anger swallowed the palace of the Lord of Llyfni and all his wicked throng.

Ever since, this huge lake remains a witness of this tragic event.

The other legend is connected with a case of revenge. The lady of Llyn Safaddan rejects the attentions of a peasant suitor because he is poor. He, however, being determined to win her, plans some way to increase his wealth, and this is done by robbing and murdering a carrier in possession of money. Again he presents himself to the lady, this time showing her the money. She wishes to know how this wealth was got, and he confesses the whole story. Again she refuses his hand, until he goes to the grave of his victim and appeases his ghost. "Arriving there, a voice is heard shouting: "Is there no vengeance for innocent blood?" Another answers: "Not until the ninth generation."

Believing that the evil day is so far off, she agrees to marry him, and they both lived long enough to see the ninth generation of the family. There are, however, no signs of the coming judgment, and they prepare a great feast. In the midst of their joy and music, a mighty earthquake opens the earth, and the whole family disappears; their home and lands are covered by the waters of Llynsafaddan, and all is peaceful.



LLANGORSE LAKE, NEAR BRECON.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ROMANS IN BRECONSHIRE.

We have seen that the earliest known people of the county were the Welshmen called Silures, whom the Romans called the "Wild men of the Woods."

Although Julius Cæsar first invaded Britain in the year 55 B.C., and the Romans continued to come for about 100 years afterwards, it was in the year 51 A.D. that the first Roman general, Ostorius Scapula, pushed into the heart of South Wales and fought for the rule of our county.

For nine years our brave countryman Caradoc, the leader of the Silures, checked the advance of the Roman soldiers, although the latter were well trained and fully armed, while Caradoc's men were raw and half-naked, and with the most crude weapons. The desperate struggle between the Welshman and the Roman was astonishing—something like that of the Boers and the English in the South African War. It was not till after thirty battles, that the natives were conquered, and Caradoc would have defied them for nine more years had he not been betrayed into the enemy's hands by a *dirty drab* (one of his own country-women), of the name of Blackfaced Curtis.

When Caradoc was taken prisoner to Rome, there was among the Romans as much rejoicing, dancing and merry-making, as if they had conquered a warlike nation of giants.

Ostorius and his legions now got into the heart of the county, and made themselves secure by constructing high

roads and building famous fortresses, the ruins of which are seen here to-day; one of the greatest and most central of them being the "Old British Gaer—the "Bannium" of the Romans. The work begun by Ostorius was completed in 70 A.D. by Julius Frontinus, a very able man and a clever soldier. His headquarters were at Caerleon-on-Usk, in Monmouthshire, and he had with him the picked Roman legions. This is the man who finally conquered the natives of Breconshire.

After repairing the ruins of the fortress, he set about making the famous military Roman road named after him.

THE JULIA STRATA.

Starting at Bath, this road travelled to Caerlleon, then on to Carmarthen, passing on its way Neath and Loughor (Casllwchwr). Then it turned N.E. up through the Vale of Towy, and, entering Breconshire, passed Rhydybriw Castle, near Trecastle. Here it crossed the Usk, and led on to the bridge of Aberbran; and, after re-crossing the river, it proceeded to the Gaer and Brecon. The Sarn Helen, another Roman road, cuts it at a spot close to the town of Brecon, and since called "The Struet," from the Latin Stratum—a street.

From the town of Brecon the Julia Strata passes under the south side of Slwch—a small hill; then on again to Llanhamlach. After touching Scethrog it travels over the Bwlch Hill, and down to the Gaer (a house is now called by that name) at Cwmdy, where there was a Roman station of vast extent. Next it passes Tretower, Crickhowell, on to Abergavenny (Gobannium), and from there to Caerlleon.

ROMAN CROSS-ROADS.

As soon as the Romans had thus opened up the country by

these great highways, it was seen that cross-roads through the middle of the districts were necessary.

One of these runs due North from Cardiff to Caerbannau (near Brecon). It passes Caerphilly and Ystrad Mynach, and enters Breconshire at Brynoer Trefil, above the town of Rhymney. Then it goes North over this bare mountain limestone, past Twynau Gwynion (White Peaks), where limestone was obtained for the Rhymney furnaces.

Next it reaches Penrhiwcalch, the highest point of this mountain. The view from this spot is one of the most attractive in the county. Two pretty valleys, the Glynollwm and the Dyffryn Crawnon, are visible, while in the distance, in the other direction, appear the stately Beacons. The Usk Valley also is seen in its beauty.

From Penrhiwcalch the Sarn (as a road is called), travels westward on to Llanfrynach—a very noted place in connection with the Romans, for it is very probable that a Roman general's villa stood here. In a field called "Clos-y-Gofiaid" (Smithfield) are found quantities of cinders and iron, which indicate that probably a forge stood here for working iron goods. The Sarn then proceeded on to the Gaer near Brecon.

Another road was

THE SARN HELEN.

This travelled from Neath to Chester. It entered the county in the S.W., and passed through the parish of Ystrad-fellte by the farms of Cefn Ucheldre and Blaen Nedd, on past the Maen Llia, a stone about 10ft. high, in the Llia Valley, where the Pontypridd Waterworks lie. Crossing over the Fan Mountain into Senny Valley, it proceeded on to the Gaer along the Valley of the Usk.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NATIVE RULERS OF THE COUNTY.

In the year 410 A.D., the Romans left our island never to return, after a stay of about 330 years. Now, native kings took into their hands the rule of the county, and there was self-government until the Normans came, and came to stay. Their power increased steadily until in 1282—when the last Prince of Wales was killed at Cefnybedd—Wales lost for ever its independence. In 1536 the Union of England and Wales, as regards laws, &c., settled finally this great question.

Without going back into the dim past—when we have no records of importance to guide us respecting the earliest native rulers—we find in the fifth century on the throne of Garthmadryn a Welshman called Tewdrig. The romantic history of his daughter, Marchell, or Marcella, brings into notice the name of the first native prince, Brychan, who was so closely connected with this district as to give the county its present Welsh name of *Brycheiniog*.

The story of Marcella is as follows :—

This princess, with a company of three hundred men, and twelve pretty maidens, in order to escape some pestilence that raged in the district, was ordered by her father, Tewdrig, to cross over to Ireland lest her health should suffer. On the journey to the coast, however, two hundred of her attendants died, and when they reached Ireland there were left only one hundred men and twelve maidens. Anlach, the Irish

king, hearing of the visit of this royal company, met the princess with a company worthy of the guests. Such a grand welcome, however, proved only the beginning of a friendship which ripened into a very happy future for the princess and her twelve maidens. Anlach himself married her, and presented each of her maids with a worthy partner.

Owen Rhoscomyl, the well-known Welsh historian, dealing with the story of Brychan, gives a different account of this mysterious person. Brychan was a descendant of Cunedda the Burner, perhaps the first Cymro warrior we read of in history. Anlach, King of Ireland, was not, he says, connected with Brychan. "There were three persons, at least of this name, and it is partly because old monks in after years rolled the records of all these Brychans into one that they gave him a family of fifty sons and daughters. Brychan came down with his cousins from the North and, after conquering this country, he received as his share the district called after him, Brycheiniog."

In a few years, Anlach and his young wife, came over with their young son Brychan, and made their home about 2 miles from Brecon, at the Gaer, on the banks of the Usk.

Brychan, who was thus descended from an Irish king, had much trouble during his reign of fifty years, the native princes being jealous of his Irish blood. He is said to have died in the year 450 A.D., having governed the county for fifty years.

The Welsh name *Brycheiniog* is derived from *Brychan* and *iog*, land—the land of Brychan. He was married three times, and, it is said, left fifty children, most of them being educated at a school in Gwenddwr on the Wye. They became saints or martyrs, and a large number of parishes and churches in the county, are called after them.

Tradition says, that for some years the Good King Arthur

ruled here, and among the valiant Knights we have Urien Reged, King of Cumberland. He lived about the year 560 A.D. and was the most famous of all the kings of Cumbria. In his Court flourished the three ancient poets of Wales, Aneurin, Taliesin, and Llywarch Hên, who, in their poems, described the brave deeds of their king. Urien bravely fought with the Saxons, who now had settled in the East of England, called Deira and Bernicia. The Britons, however, quarrelled among themselves, and a famous battle was fought in 577 A.D.—the Battle of Arderydd—the description of which, by Llywarch Hên, forms one of the oldest poems in the Welsh language.

In one of these, the renowned and good King Arthur fell. Very often these battles were fought on the most trivial dispute. A squabble about a lark's nest and a couple of dogs was the cause of that fatal battle of Arderydd referred to above. Llywarch Hên, it is said, died at the age of one hundred and fifty years, having lost twenty of his sons in these constant battles. He lived on the banks of the Dee. These lines show his sorrow at the death of his sons :—

" From frenzy dire, and wild affright,
Keep my senses through the night."

Many stories are related about some of the daughters of Brychan, who had chosen a holy life as virgins. Cenai, or Keyne, retired to a forest to live where serpents were very numerous, but in the power of God, she changed them into stones and so made the place fit for her abode.

After the death of Brychan, the county was for a period under the rule of his two sons, Rhain and Clydwyn, and his grandson, Cradoc Fraich Fras (Cradoc of the mighty arm), who, it is said, was one of the Knights of the Round Table. in fact, one of the three chief heroes of Arthur's Court.

"These are my three knights of battle,
Mael and Lludd clad in armour,
And the pillar of Wales—Cradoc."

Neither wisdom nor common-sense seemed to be the lot of these native rulers, through some centuries; for we find that they were constantly falling out with one another, their aim being to revenge each other's supposed wrongs, and carry off as much booty as they possibly could.

While, however, these home quarrels were going on, another party added to their troubles, and the constant jealousies of the Welshmen gave the Saxons a chance, which they had desired for a long time.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SAXONS ENTER BRECONSHIRE.

In the 8th century, Ethelbald was King of Mercia—the middle of England alongside of Wales. The Saxons cast longing eyes upon the country between the Severn and the Wye, called Ferrex, and which, up till now, was governed by the ruler of Breconshire. This district was extremely fertile, and the Saxons made raids upon it plundering and destroying it.

For a time, the Welsh contented themselves with only defending their rights, but their patience at last failed, and they defeated the Saxons at the Battle of Carno, near Rhymney. By the year 776 A.D. the Saxons were driven completely out of Wales, and the Britons ravaged with fire and sword the King of Mercia's territory, and brought home with them large herds of cattle.

This, however, did not end the struggle, for during the next hundred years, Offa, the English King and a host of others, poured into Wales and scored a long series of successes. To make matters worse, the Welsh fell out among themselves—a failing which brought repeated misfortunes upon the natives.

In 893 A.D. another trouble was added to their lot. The Danes, driven from the English coasts by King Alfred, made inroads into Wales, and came into Breconshire as far as Builth.

During these unlucky days, Wales was under the govern-

ment of the first great Welsh Law Maker Hywel Dda (Hywel the Good). His code of laws, were collected from the oldest records. As they were based upon the best customs of his nation, they must ever remain a great proof of his wisdom and ability, and the just way in which he governed, won for him the title Hywel the Good.

About the year 944 A.D. he divided the whole of the Principality into grand and petty—large and small districts. This county he divided into 4 *grand* portions, *Cantrefi*, or Hundreds; these again he sub-divided into smaller ones, called *Cymmydau*. Hay and Builth were not then included in the county, and the boundaries towards the East extended much beyond their present limits. He also checked the inroads of the English.

Several native princes of Breconshire were one after another defeated, the last native King of Brecon, Bleddyn ab Maenarch, sharing the same fate. His rule was one of peace and wisdom, but his reign closes for ever the period of independence in the county, for the Normans had now become complete masters, not only of this county, but of Wales generally. Bleddyn had married Elinor, daughter of Rhys ab Tewdwr, the Prince of South Wales, and once more the last effort was made by Bleddyn to retain the county in his hands.

CHAPTER X.

THE FINAL STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE.

Bernard Newmarch, the Norman, conquers Brecknock.

The brave Rhys Ap Tewdwr was chosen as Prince of South Wales by the united voice of his people, but such honour, granted by a barbarous and half-civilized people, was not to be trusted, and soon proved very troublesome and dangerous. Finding that popular favour could not be relied upon, he was compelled to escape for safety to Ireland. He, however, returned, and regained his power over the whole of Wales: still peace continued only for a short time. A plot against Rhys was set on foot.

Einon, son of the Lord of Pembroke, hastened to Iestyn ab Gwrgan, Prince of Glamorgan—a man of base habits, a tyrant of low character, who was waiting to revenge himself upon his superior king. Both these proved traitors to their native land, and Gwalia fell at last a prey to the Norman lords—foreigners in language, customs and manners. Einon, during the French Wars, had been an officer in the English Army, and was a favourite in the Court of London.

He now, therefore, proved a useful tool in the hands of the English, for it was agreed that he should invite the Norman nobles to join him against Rhys, the Prince of South Wales. Robert Fitzhamon, with twelve knights, eagerly answered the call. After these foes had laid waste a great part of the territories of Rhys, he met them at a large plain on the S.W. borders

of Breconshire, called Hirwain, where a bloody battle was fought, ending in the complete defeat of Rhys Ap Tewdwr.

This victory led to the invasion of Breconshire. The old veteran Rhys—now in his 98th year—was seen once more helping Bleddyn ap Maenarch (the last prince of the county), to defend his native heath from these foreigners, who had already formed in battle array on the Crug, close to Bleddyn's house.

This grand old man, Rhys, seeing the legions preparing for the fight, made a final desperate effort. Fired with a true patriot's zeal for his dear old Cambria, he put on his war tackle and girded his sword.

On the Crug, overlooking the town of Brecon from the west, the Norman-Welsh host were assembled, the four traitor Welsh princes, together with Robert Fitzhamon, forming this unholy alliance, and were preparing to attack the brave and hoary Welsh chieftain of 98 years. Hark his call to arms :—

“ Sons of Chiefs, arise ! Behold
Yonder banner's massy fold,
'Ere the morning breeze unfurl it,
To the dust inglorious hurl it.
Down upon their columns sweep
As the whirlwind on the deep,
When its all-destroying breath
Lays the mighty low in death.”

But the trained hosts of foreigners, were too much for the valiant Welshmen. Treachery's black work prevailed. With a mighty sweep the Norman soldiers left their camp on the Crug, and pressed down the valley to meet the true patriotic Welshmen with Prince Rhys and Bleddyn at their head.

Long and furiously the battle raged ; the brave band fell one after another. Nothing could withstand the Norman host, falling like an avalanche on the faithful few. The gallant old warrior Rhys was slain, and Gwalia lost the day.

The Battle of the Crug sounded the death-knell of native liberty. The traitors had now for ever deprived their race and country of their dearest heritage—Liberty.

While the victorious shouts of the victors rent the air, a faithful few were standing around the lifeless body of their valiant and aged leader, Rhys Ap Tewdwr. These doleful strains describe the scene :—

“ Lo ! in anguish lying,
Fleet his soul is flying.
Yet still is seen
His warlike mien
Like some hero dying :
Cymru ! 'Tis thy prince expiring,
Bravest of thy race retiring,
Fame no more his bosom firing,
Thy last hope and pride.”

If the veteran was gone, Bleddyn was left, and there may be another chance.

THE BATTLE OF THE GAER.

The Last Fight for Independence.

In the year 1090, Rhys ap Tewdwr was slain by the Frenchmen, and in the following year, a greater French general arrived, named Bernard Newmarch, a relation of William Rufus, King of England. While the Normans were just recovering from the drunken feasts and revelry after their victory over Rhys, Newmarch summoned a Council of War on the Crug, proclaiming to the Welsh traitors and the knights, that the victory must be followed up without delay.

He had brought with him, straight from Hirwain a swarm of free-booters, after the recent battle, for King Rufus had given full powers to Newmarch to take possession of all the lands captured from the natives. Urged on by these promises, the Normans once more were furiously preparing for the coming fight. The Hirlas Horn, the old Welsh cup—

the special sign of good-will and joy among the Welsh—was now dishonoured, and in the hands of the enemy. Their riotous shouts echoed to the quaffs from the native cup.

They now marched on Caerbannau (the haunt of the Romans of old, and then of the Britons), a camp the very soil of which had been drenched in ages gone by with the blood of native patriots. It was now held by the bravest and fairest of Gwalia's sons led by Bleddyn ab Maenarch.

“Up rose the ruddy dawn of day,
The armies met in dread array,
On Caervoug's famed field;
Loud the British clarions sound,
The Normans gasping on the ground,
The bloody contest will not yield.”

The battle raged the district around. In the Village of Battle, the Normans worked havoc on their foes—their superior numbers sweeping everything before them.

Proceeding along the lane called Heol-y-Cymry, Bleddyn and his troops carefully noted the movements of the enemy, from whom he was hidden by the higher ground on the left. While Bernard and his men now attempted to cross the River Yscir, through a wood in Cwmgwern-y-Gad (the alder dingle of the fray), the Welshmen poured down the common near Battle Village; but the discipline of the Norman was too much for the brave natives, whose veterans fell thickly in the carnage. They were forced to retreat to the camp on the Gaer, hotly pressed by the enemy.

The fury of the battle ceased not, until the Welshman's residence was attacked, and there he himself was slain, gallantly defending his life, his liberty, and his country.

Thus fell Bleddyn, and with him was lost for ever the independence of Brycheiniog—as a British state. Henceforth we shall see foreign masters ruling the land.

The old Gaer was razed to the ground, and Bernard built his castle, where the present ruins of Brecknock Castle now stand.

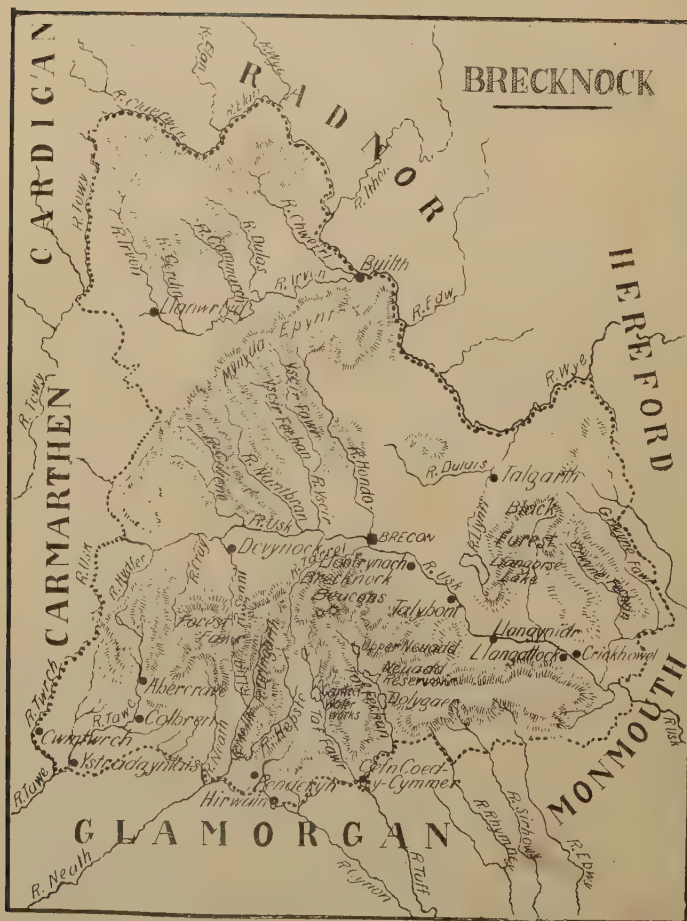
CHAPTER XI.

NORMAN RULE.

The Reign of the Lords Marchers.

Bernard, now the master of the county, at once rewarded his faithful knights by dividing the county into fifteen districts, or manors, and distributing these among them, while he himself ruled as lord of the whole county. Disliking the situation of Caerbannau—the old camp—he carried all the materials of the old fortress to build a new castle, the present Brecknock Castle. Near this, he also built a new town for his followers and their families. Thus arose, about the year 1092, the town of Brecknock.

He divided his district as follows:—To Sir Reginald Aubrey, the Manor of Abercynrig and Slwch; to Sir Humphrey Burghill, the Manor of Crickhowell; to Sir Peter Gunter, the Manor of Tregunter; to Sir Miles de Picarde, the Manor of Seethrog; to Sir John Walbeoff, the Manor of Llanhamlach and Llanfihangel Talyllyn; to Sir Humphrey Sollers, the Manor of Tredwstan; to Sir Walter Havard, the Manor of Pontwilliam; to Sir Richard de Bois, the Manor of Trebois; to Sir Richard Peytin, the Manor of Peytin; to Sir John Skull the manors of Bolgoed and Cray; to Sir Thomas Bullen, the Manor of Wernfawr; to Sir Philip Walwyn, the Manor of Hay; to Sir Hugh Surdwal, the Manor of Aberyscir; to Sir Giles Pierrepont, the Manor of Gilestone; to Walter de Corpus, lands in Llansantffraid.



The Peytins and Pierrepont soon left the country. Some of the county families at present, are descended from the rest of the above-named Norman nobles, though not one bears their name.

In order to secure these districts, Bernard next erected the Norman castles which dotted the Vales of the Usk and Wye, being altogether, thirteen in number. The church and monastery of St. John, in Brecon, also were erected by him.

These foreign masters were not popular in their various districts, and for a long time there were constant feuds and bloodshed. In order to gain favour with the Welsh, Bernard married Nest, the granddaughter of Gruffydd Ap Llewelyn, prince of North Wales, a lady, however, who does no honour to her country. Her life was a disgrace to herself, she being guilty, it is said, even of murder.

After having added Radnorshire to his dominion, in a few years, he retired from his military life; and, as the custom was in those days for warriors to become monks, he devoted the rest of his life to religious duties and customs. The object of doing this, appears to be a desire to atone for the vices and sins of their former life. It was now, that he built the Priory Church of St. John the Evangelist. Bernard died early in the reign of Henry I., and was buried at Gloucester.

Thus ended the first chapter in the history of the Norman rule of Breconshire.

Milo Fitzwalter, another Norman baron, took his place, and the story of the next eighty years is that of his five sons, who, in their turn, took over the rule of the county.

Following them, came the family of De Breos. Most of these foreign rulers, never really understood their subjects; nor even tried to do so; and they were neither honourable in

nor fitted for, the important positions they held. The Norman rule is thus summed up by one writer :—

“ Sometimes driven by the natives within the walls of their castles, sometimes lords over these lands, the Normans lived the most riotous lives ; rough soldiers, who existed but to fight, giving their consciences over to the priests ; in their youth, building castles, in their old age, building churches, or endowing existing churches,” though it is only fair to say that this was the usual way in which foreign conquerors treated the conquered in those days.

Another William de Breos was a monster in cruelty—the murderer of Trahaern, Lord of Llangorse.

Reginald, one of the sons of the above, also brought trouble to his people. He was the son-in-law of Prince Llewelyn of North Wales, having married his daughter Gwladys. For a time, he fought with his father-in-law against King John, who was trying to rob the Principality of its freedom ; but Henry III. bribed him with a promise, that his father’s estates should be restored to him. His conduct enraged Llewelyn, who, in return, brought his forces into the county and prepared to raze the town of Brecon to the ground. The Burgesses however, on payment of 100 marks, prevailed upon Llewelyn to retire without carrying out his purpose.

Some time after this, Llewelyn and Reginald became friends. This, however displeased the English king very much, who, from revenge, robbed Reginald of the lordships of Talgarth and Blaenllyfni, and Reginald, in disgust, left the county, and joined a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

There was now open war between the English king and the Welsh, and it is to be regretted that the next ruler of Breconshire took sides against Llewelyn. This faithless Cymro, by name again, William de Breos, in a battle with Llewelyn,

was taken prisoner, and although the whole of Breconshire was offered as a ransom for him, it was refused, and he was at last hanged by Llewelyn on a neighbouring tree. The struggle between King Henry and Llewelyn became more fierce, and for many years the whole of Wales was in arms against the English.

Llewelyn was commanded by Henry III. to appear before him at Shrewsbury for the execution of the late Norman ruler of Breconshire, but instead of obeying, he rallied his forces, laid siege to the town of Brecon, and then returned home to North Wales. The lordship of the county now passed into the hands of Eve, the widow of the murdered William de Breos, and on her death, in 1246, it passed to the De Bohuns—a powerful Norman family. Humphrey de Bohun had married Elinor, the daughter of the last ruler.

CHAPTER XII.

DEATH OF PRINCE LLEWELYN.

The power of De Bohun was little more than in name only, for we find that Llewelyn was the sole sovereign of Wales, and had such a large number of friends in the country that the people of their own accord submitted to him. This was, of course, very galling to the English king, as he saw that even the whole of Wales was passing quickly into the hands of the Welsh prince. In 1281 war was proclaimed in earnest—a war which did not cease until “Llewelyn Ein Llyw Olaf” fell by the spear-thrust of Adam de Francton, at Cefn-y-Bedd, Dec. 10th, 1282.

Archbishop Peckham, on behalf of the King, Edward I., was sent to Llewelyn on two occasions offering him a pension of £100 a year if he put down his sword. Llewelyn answered with disgust that, even if he were base enough to accept the offer, such was the honest pride of his countrymen that they would not suffer him to enjoy it—or permit him to sell his country’s freedom for a pension.

The Archbishop, smarting under this bitter reply, became very enraged, and cursed him and his people. The country now entered upon a serious conflict, and Humphrey de Bohun was entrusted with the county of Brecon.

It is not the purpose of this book to relate the story of this struggle outside the county—how Llewelyn swept everything before him in North Wales for a time; how he defied the English in his mountain fortress of Snowdon. Finding that

open war did not seem to capture the brave Welshman, the king decided upon a secret plot to gain his end.

The Norman lords in Wales—"Lords Marchers," as they were called—although they hated Llewelyn, did not very dearly love the king of England. In order to harass in every possible way the Cymry in their districts, the king had given to these "Lords Marchers" all possible power, making them independent of all authorities in Wales. Once the country was completely subdued, their power would be withdrawn and handed back to their king. This they knew well, and Llewelyn also knew it.

After brooding over the matter, at last a scheme was hatched. There were two men at his disposal, Edward Mortimer of Wigmore, and John Giffard. Mortimer was a cousin of Llewelyn, and his father's life had been spared on a previous occasion on account of this family relation. Giffard was a baron just appointed Constable of the new Castle of Builth.

A more fitting person than Mortimer could not be got, for Llewelyn, while he believed the king might capture him (through treachery, if possible) still thought, that Mortimer would be the last in the world to stain his hands with the blood of his kinsman. The plan was to induce Llewelyn and his warriors to come down to the Valley of the Wye secretly, and promise him, that Builth Castle would receive him. Knowing John Giffard, the keeper of Builth Castle, Llewelyn believed that he might change sides again, for at one time he was a strong friend of Montford, whom, however, he deserted in times of distress. In fact, he would fight for anybody as long as it would pay him. Llewelyn, therefore, laid some hope for help on the Builth garrison if he came down. Indeed, he was told plainly that Builth Castle would be given him. However, when he knocked at the gate for shelter—as he



LLEWELYN'S LAST RIDE.

was fleeing before his enemies—he was refused admission; and very soon he met with a tragic death not far from the Castle.

This conduct has won for the inhabitants the name of “The Traitors of Builth.”

The story of this tragic death cannot be told better than in the vivid picture drawn by Owen Rhoscomyl in his description of Llewelyn's last ride in “Flame-bearers of Welsh History” :—

“On Thursday, Dec. 10th, 1282, Llewelyn received a message from the plotters luring him to Aberedw, some miles down the Wye, below Builth, and on the other side of the stream. The snow was lying white on the world, and the rivers (deeper than now) were running black and full, but the ford across the Wye was still passable.

“Choosing 18 of his household men, his bodyguard, Llewelyn rode to Llechryd and crossed. There he left his 18 to hold the ford till he should come back, and then, attended only by one squire, young Grono Vychan, son of his minister, Ednyved Vychan, he pushed on down the valley to Aberedw.

“At Aberedw he was to meet a young gentlewoman, who was to conduct him to a stealthy meeting with some chiefs of that district. If it be asked why he rode thus almost alone, and almost unarmoured, the answer is that he was on a secret errand, in which he must not attract attention to himself until he had seen the local chiefs and arranged all the details of a rising on their part. The more secret and sudden that rising was the more likely it was to succeed. He was taking one of the risks that a fearless captain takes in such a war. It was like him to do it, for he was a steadfast soul.

“ At Aberedw, however, the gentlewoman was not there to meet him. In truth, the whole message was part of the plot of Giffard and the Mortimers, though he did not know it yet.

“ Yet, as he waited, he thought of how the snow would betray which way he went, either to the secret meeting with the chiefs, or in stealing away for safety from any sudden enemies. Therefore, he went to the smith of the place, Red Madoc of the Widemouth, and bade him take the thin shoes off the horses and put them on again backwards. Anyone finding his tracks after that would think that he had been coming, not going.

“ Then, as dark fell, he found that the Mortimers, with their horsemen, were closing in round the place. Danger was upon him indeed. Swiftly he stole away with his squire and hid himself in a cave, which may still be seen at Aberedw.

“ All that night he lay hidden, and then, as soon as the earliest grey of dawn crept over the snowy earth, he stole away with his squire again, and rode back to Llechryd. He could only go slowly, as he had to go stealthily, for his horse could not gallop because of its shoes being backwards.

“ At Llechryd he found his faithful eighteen, but by this time the river was too high for crossing there. They must find some bridge. Now the nearest bridge was at Builth, under the walls of the great castle.

“ Llewelyn believed that, by the trick of the horse-shoes he had thrown the Mortimers off his track. Also, he remembered that Builth Castle was to be delivered to him according to a promise. He took his eighteen men and rode back to the bridge at Builth, no great distance down the valley. He reached the bridge barely in time. The Mortimers at



LLEWELYN'S CAVE.

Aberedw had terrified Red Madoc, the smith, into confessing the trick of the horse-shoes. Like hounds they were following his trail, and now they caught sight of him crossing the bridge with his little troop.

“The bridge was of wood, like the rest of the bridges of that district. Llewelyn turned and broke it down behind him, the black flood of the full Wye mocking the Mortimers as they drew rein on their panting steeds before the broken timbers. Their hoped-for victims had escaped for the moment. In their fury they turned and dashed back down the valley to cross at Y Rhyd (now called Erwood) eight miles below.

“Llewelyn expected the Castle of Builth to be given up to him. But the garrison refused, doubtless making some excuse for waiting till the county had risen. He could not waste time; the bridge on the road to Cefn-y-Bedd was gone. He took his eighteen and led the way along the southern bank of the Yrvon, to another bridge just above the little Church of Llanynys. There he crossed, and posted the eighteen to hold that bridge, doubtless feeling himself safely returned from great peril.

“In thankfulness for that escape, too, he caused a White Friar to hold a service for him, perhaps at the end of the bridge, perhaps in the little Church of Llanynys, beside the dark Yrvon. It does not matter much where the service was held, the whole of that ground was to be made sacred that day.

“This done, Llewelyn went up to the grange of Llanvair, a farmstead belonging to the Parish Church of Builth, doubtless to get food and an hour’s sleep, after the cold watching of that winter’s night in the cave. After a frosty night of scout-work one’s eyes get heavy when one gets warm next

day, and a great drowsiness stills the blood even of the stubbornest man.

“Meanwhile, the Mortimers had crossed the Wye at Erwood, and, with Giffard, were riding fast for the bridge at Orewyn, where the eighteen held their post. In headlong haste their leading squadron attacked the bridge—but the eighteen had not been chosen in vain. They kept the bridge.

“While the clamour was at its height Grono Vychan roused Llewelyn and told him of it.

“‘Are not my men at the bridge?’ demanded the Prince.

“‘They are,’ answered Grono.

“‘Then I care not if all England were on the other side,’ returned Llewelyn proudly. He knew what manner of men he had left to hold that bridge.

“But down in front of the bridge, where the enemy were shouting in their baffled rage, as they tried in vain to hew a way across, one of Giffard’s captains spoke out. It was Helias ap Philip Walwyn, from lower down the Wye.

“‘We shall do no good here,’ he shouted. ‘But I know a ford a little distance off, that they do not know of. Let some of the bravest and strongest come with me, and we can cross and take the bridge in the rear.’”

At once the bravest crowded after Helias to the ford, where the water seems as dark and deep in winter as the rest of the long black pool on either hand. They crossed. The eighteen were charged in rear as well as in front. But they kept faith. Where Llewelyn had posted them, there they died. As men should end, proudly fighting, so they ended.

‘Till the eighteen fell,’ says the bard, ‘it was well with Llewelyn ap Gruffydd.’

Then over their bodies poured all the mass of Mortimer's men, with Giffard's, to seek Llewelyn's little force on the high ground beyond. Fast the horsemen spurred, and as they hastened they came suddenly upon an unarmoured man with one companion, hurrying on foot towards where the bridge was roaring under the trampling host. One of the horsemen, Stephen or Adam of Frankton, in Llewelyn's old lordship of Ellesmere, dashed forward with his men, and one ran his lance through the younger of the two. The other one was running up through the little dingle, to get back to the army above in time to lead it in the coming battle. On the bank above the little spring at the head of the dingle, grew a great spread of broom (banadl). In that bush of broom Frankton overtook the man and ran his spear out through him in a mortal wound.

That man was Llewelyn. The accident had happened. Go to the spot, and the people will tell you that no broom has ever grown again in Llanganten parish from that dark day to this.

So died Llewelyn ap Gruffydd; a more gallant soul never passed to God.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RULE OF THE DE BOHUNS.

From 1246 to 1377, the year when Henry IV. himself became Lord of Brecknock, the history of the county is that of five or six Lords of Brecon, who seem to have brought very little peace and prosperity to the district. Personal jealousy and greed were the chief marks of their rule. The Burgesses of Brecon have just cause to hate the memory of Humphrey De Bohun, the ninth of that name, for he deprived them of their old rights and revoked all grants and charters given by his ancestors. He was "a cross, peevish, old Bachelor." By his will, he gave a hundred marks to the Priory Church of St. John, Brecon, and to the Friar preachers of the town he gave £10 a year "to pray for him."

The last of this name brought honour to the family. Humphrey de Bohun lived in splendour in Brecknock Castle, which he enlarged and re-fitted in grand fashion. The rights of the people were restored. A charter was granted to the Borough in 1395, and he consented to the holding of a fair for sixteen days.

The Castle became a great attraction to the gay company of a large number of his friends, who were entertained in royal fashion by their generous host. For eleven years he lived peacefully with all around him, and at his death, in 1377, he was mourned as a good and worthy ruler, a kind and true friend of the people. By his example, he snatched the name of the De Bohuns from disgrace, and removed to a great extent

the stain left by some of his family before him. So honoured was his name, that his daughter Mary married Henry, Earl of Derby, who now became Lord of Brecknock, and afterwards King Henry IV. of England.

HENRY IV., LORD OF BRECKNOCK.

Owen Glyndwr and Sir Dafydd Gam.

While Henry IV. was putting his house in order as King of England, his Brecknock district was in a turmoil through the quarrels of two noted Welshmen, the great Owen Glyndwr and the Breconshire squire, Sir Dafydd Gam. There are many Owens in Welsh history, and all worthy sons of Gwalia, but Glyndwr is the greatest of them all—the noble champion of the poor folk. He had the true hero's soul, that burns the brighter, the deeper the darkness around it. He was well-educated, a polished gentleman, used to courts and camps, and a statesman of the first rank. His plans were drawn for the whole of Wales. So great was his power at one time, that in 1408 Shrewsbury refused to open its gates to the king's army for fear of him.

And it was an evil day for this county, when Glyndwr entered it as an enemy. Lord Grey of Ruthin tried to rob him of his lands, and this led to a bitter quarrel, in which the king became involved. Glyndwr openly defied the king himself.

He also had a personal quarrel with Dafydd Gam, who had forsaken his Welsh country and had given himself completely to the king and the Lancastrians. It is said that Dafydd Gam, in a quarrel in High Street, Brecon, slew Richard, Lord of Slwch, his kinsman, and for that, he had to leave the country. Ever after, he completely gave himself over to the king's cause.

Gruffydd, son of Owen Glyndwr came into Breconshire with an army, but was defeated in a battle near Crickhowell. Among the slain was Tudor, another brother of Glyndwr—extremely like him in features, and it was once reported that Glyndwr himself was killed. It appears that Glyndwr had a little wart above one of his eyebrows, and this was the only mark to prove that he was not the victim.

To save the county and the country from the terrible grip of Glyndwr, the king, without delay, ordered all the castles in Wales to be fortified strongly with English garrisons. Breconshire was entrusted to Sir Thomas Berkley, with the power of demanding assistance from the sheriffs of the six adjoining counties. Owen, however, succeeded in destroying the house of Sir Dafydd—the Castle of the Poytins. The county now remained in the hands of the Crown until the end of Henry V's. reign.

The King, in person, came down to defend Brecon Castle, which was besieged by Glyndwr, who, however, failed in his attempt, for it was defended by one hundred men-at-arms and three hundred archers on horseback. On September 15, 1403, we find the King at Defynock sending forth an order, promising pardon to all the rebels, if they would lay down their arms. After a gallant life on behalf of his country, Glyndwr died in 1415, aged 61. His grave is a secret to this day. One writer speaks thus of it :—

“ It is beside no church, neither under the shadow of any ancient yew. It is a spot safer and more sacred still. Rain does not fall on it ; hail nor sleet chills no sere sod above it. It is for ever green with the green of eternal spring. Time shall not touch it, decay shall not dishonour it—for that grave is in the heart of every true Cymro.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DUKES OF BUCKINGHAM—LORDS OF BRECKNOCK.

For over a hundred years, 1400—1536, the story of the county is repeated—a time of cruelty and quarrels among those appointed by the King to govern it. It must be remembered also, that not one of the past rulers governed the whole district now known as the County of Brecknock—for several lordships embracing the estates of Dinas, Talgarth, Blaenllyfni, and Builth, were at one time ruled by other lords or barons. Farmers and landowners complained bitterly of the rule of the Dukes: rents were heavy, and fines imposed for the most trifling offences. Among the orders issued to one tenant was the following:—

“If any man enters the Lord’s park, if caught, he was to be kept in the Stocks just outside the park gate till he paid up his fine—and, if he did not pay, he was to lose his right foot.”

During the reign of these Buckingham Lords the people were like slaves, in daily fear even of their lives. And among these tyrants of the period we are now speaking of, the Staffords stand out on the pages of history as cruel and bitter enemies to the welfare and peace of the inhabitants.

Buckingham, a grandson of the first Duke, was at one time the richest and most powerful nobleman in England, having been richly rewarded by Richard III., then Duke of Gloucester, for his services to him. But Richard found him to be working only for his own ends, and, in reality, was a supporter of the Lancastrians—Richard’s enemies. Finding

that his motives were suspected this Buckingham retired to his Castle of Brecon to defy the king. Here already was the famous Morton, Bishop of Ely, whom Richard had given as a prisoner in his charge.

These two—the most powerful nobles in the land became fast friends, and hatched a plot to kill Richard; a plot, however, which rebounded with terrible results to Buckingham. He dared not leave his den, for the king had now ordered Sir Thomas Vaughan, son of Sir Roger Vaughan, of Tretower, to pounce upon him the moment he came out. However, he secretly escaped, and was on his way to Salisbury, when floods in the river stopped him. His followers melted before him like snow in the sun, and while he was sheltering in an old servant's house, he was betrayed for £1,000. He was then taken to Shrewsbury and executed at Salisbury, July, 1483, without trial.

The fate of his son, Edward Stafford, in the reign of Henry VII., was like that of his father. He held a larger number of earldoms and lordships than his father, and was Prince of Brecknock. He was filled with vanity and pomp, and his want of judgment led him to a sad and untimely death, yet the people loved him and sorrowed at his end. Cardinal Wolsey and he were bitter enemies.

It seemed, that the duke was holding the basin for the king to wash his hands, and the cardinal came and dipped his hands also. This so offended the duke, that he threw the water into the cardinal's shoes. It is said, that the duke intended claiming the crown, if the king died without issue, and then having his revenge upon Wolsey, and the dispute grew so serious between them, that a charge of treason was brought against Buckingham. The Duke of Norfolk, in tears, gave the fatal order for his execution—and although a

pardon was offered him, the unfortunate Edward was too proud to accept a pardon, unless the king himself commanded it. On May 17th, 1521, this last Lord of Brecknock, the Duke of Buckingham, and the last of that family, was executed.

Shakespeare makes him speak to those around him at his death in these lines :—

When I came hither I was lord high constable
And Duke of Buckingham :—now poor Edward Bohun,
Yet I am better than my base accusers
Who never knew what truth meant : I now seal it ;
My noble father, Henry of Buckingham,
Who first rais'd head against usurping Richard,
Flying for succour to his servant Banister,
Being distress'd was by that wretch betray'd,
And without trial fell ; God's peace be with him !

I had my trial,
And must needs say, a noble one—which make me
A little happier than my wretched father :
Yet thus far we are in one fortune ; both
Fell by our servants—by those men we lov'd most ;
A most unnatural and faithless service !
Heaven has an end in all ; yet, you that hear me,
This from a dying man receive as certain :
Where you are liberal of your loves and counsels
Be sure you be not loose ; for those you make friends,
And give your hearts to, when they once perceive
The least rub in your fortunes, fall away
Like water from ye—never found again
But where they mean to sink ye. All good people
Pray for me !—I must now forsake ye—the last hour
Of my long weary life is come upon me.
Farewell ! and when you would say something sad
Speak how I fell. I have done and God forgive me.

One said of his execution “ that a butcher's dog had run down the finest buck in England ”—alluding to Wolsey being the son of a butcher.

For five hundred years the Lordship of Brecon had played a very important part in the history of our country, but now the greatest and last change took place. The county, together with the borough of Brecon, and castles, manors, and de-

pendencies, was completely absorbed into the power of the crown, and the history of the past had now proved that some better mode of governing the country was needed. This was brought about by the union of England and Wales, which will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1536.

The power of the feudal Lords had brought neither prosperity nor peace to the county; in fact, it had been its curse, and, as the independence of Wales had been lost, the best thing to be done was to join Wales to England. Slavery, oppression, and injustice, had been the work of the Lords Marchers, and it is to the honour of this county that one of its noble sires, Sir John Price, of the Priory, Brecon, resolved to save his country from a repetition of these evils. He had great influence at the King's Court, and his strong will at last succeeded in getting Henry VIII's consent, to the petition laid before him, praying for this act of justice to his country Gwalia.

It reads thus :—

"We, on the part of your Highness's subjects and inhabitants of that portion of the island, which our invaders first called Wales, most humbly prostrate at your Highness's feet, do crave to be adopted, into the same laws and privileges which your other subjects enjoy."

Henry, as a good statesman, seeing it was time to check the evils of the rule of these Feudal Lords, gave his consent, and affixed the Royal Seal to the Act of Union of England and Wales in 1536.

It was Henry VIII. that divided Wales into counties whose boundaries were fixed as they remain to this day. The Statute enacted : " That all the lordships, parishes, cwmwds, cantrefi shall be, and every part thereof shall stand and be for ever from the said Feast of All Saints, and shall be reputed, accepted, named, and taken as parts of the said County or Shire of Brecknock, and that the said town of Brecknock shall be accepted, reputed and taken head and shire town of the said Shire or County of Brecknock. And that the Shire Court shall be kept or holden at the said town of Brecknock."

Henceforth we have a Lord Lieutenant as the head of the government of the county; a system still in force through all the counties of England and Wales.

The lordship of Brecon, however, although it remained entirely in the Crown until 1617, was vested in trustees for the use of the Prince of Wales (afterwards Charles I.), and the property, after many years, passed through the hands of several owners, and now is in the possession of Lord Tredegar. The lordships of Builth, Dinas, and Blaenllyfni, are now owned by the county families, whose descendants still live in the county.

When Henry Vaughan was Queen Elizabeth's Lieutenant and Steward of the county, the cruel and unjust way in which the annual rents were levied, caused an insurrection in the county. A prisoner in the county gaol, in 1680, wrote a poem on the disturbance, and this appears to be the only account we have of the trouble. The enraged people, one day, came down from the hills with their billhooks, vowing that they would pull down the castle and drag Vaughan from his home. However, the affray ended without much injury, either to the castle or its defenders.

THE CIVIL WAR, 1642—1645.

There was no very serious conflict in this county during the Civil War, although the inhabitants had to throw themselves into the struggle. Men and horses had to be found, and, of course, the county had to bear its heavy share of the cost, and, generally speaking, it was favourable to the king throughout the war. After the battle of Naseby, in 1645, Charles passed through the county collecting fresh forces. Failing to recruit men in Glamorganshire, on August 4th, 1645, he left Cardiff and started on his way north. Having sent forward his guards to Brecon, he himself passed over the Beacons at night, and reached the Priory on the 5th. Here he was received by Herbert Price, of the Priory, governor of the town and castle, and stayed the night. He was guarded by three companies of soldiers on his way from Cardiff, Sir Thomas Glenham's foot-soldiers being his bodyguards. In the Priory House that night, he wrote the well-known letter to his son :—

“ Charles, it is very fit for you to prepare for the worst. Wherefore my pleasure is, whensoever you find yourself in danger of falling into the rebel's hands, that you convey yourself to France, and there to be under your mother's care, who is to have full power of your education in all things except religion, and in that not to meddle at all, but leave it entirely to the care of your tutor, the Bishop of Salisbury. This is all at this time from your loving father, Charles R.”

A great battle was fought in Brecon in 1645, in which the king lost seven hundred men in killed and prisoners. On account of his royalist sympathy Colonel Herbert Price was deprived of his seat in Parliament. For some time, the Castle of Brecon and the county were under the power of the royalists, but in a short time the county was reduced.

By the year 1647 the person of the king was in the hands of Cromwell and the Parliament, and a charge of treason was brought against Sir William Lewis, of Llangorse, as one of the Members of the House who had been the chief enemies of the Army. He was taken prisoner to Ludlow by Sir William Vaughan, but was released on payment of a fine of eight score pounds.

The county consists of six large divisions, called Hundreds, and we shall now proceed to describe them.

CHAPTER XVI.

DEFYNOCK HUNDRED.

This large division lies in the west of the county, and adjoins that of Merthyr Cynog, and that of Pencelli. It is very mountainous, and in the extreme south-west contains a large number of mining towns which are growing rapidly with the working of the coal measures. The River Usk, in its course, flows across its upper part, and passes through a very well-wooded, hilly, and fine country. For about nine miles from the town of Brecon the scenery is very fine, with extensive pasture and cultivated farms.

The Neath and Brecon Railway travels from the county town through Colbren Junction and down the Swansea Valley through Ystradgynlais—a district which promises to become the most thriving and populous part of the county.

The Hundred contains the parishes of Penderyn, Ystrad-fellte, Ystradgynlais, Llywel, Defynock, Llanspyddid, St. David's.

The chief places in this Hundred are Penderyn, Hirwain (partly), Ystradgynlais, Abercrave, Cwmtwrch (partly), Tre-castle, Senny Bridge.

PENDERYN :

This village lies in an open country, about two miles from Hirwain, and about five miles from the village of Ystradfellte. The parish of Penderyn is triangular in shape, and on its southern side borders on Glamorganshire. The northern side is of the old red sandstone field, in other parts the limestone is abundant, while the parts bordering Glamorgan consists of coal-measures. Extensive quarries of silica sand, and limestone are worked near the village, and also towards the Neath Valley, where the well-known gun-powder works are situated.

The situation of Penderyn is very bracing and open, especially to the East, towards Cwm Cadlan, and to the North towards the mountain called the Gadair. The several peaks around here are "The Voel" (Bare), The Glog, and Cadair Arthur (Arthur's Seat), and Penmoelallt, the highest, which is about 1,225ft. above the sea-level. In the parish there are to be seen several cairns of stones, which point to a period of struggle in the old warlike days. It is very likely that Cwm Cadlan was the scene of bitter conflicts in those days.

THE INDUSTRIES OF PENDERYN.

While there are no ironworks at present in this parish, there are ruins and "tips," showing plainly that the din of furnaces and the rattling of wheels once sounded here.

In the village of Pontprenllwyd, in 1756, were started ironworks by a Mr. Maybery, from Brecon, when charcoal was used; and in 1757 the works were removed to Brecon as (it is supposed) wood for charcoal-making was more plentiful.

The Hirwain Ironworks also were opened in 1757 by Maybery and Wilkins, when coal was obtained from the mountain side, and limestone from Penderyn along tramroads constructed for the purpose. After passing through several

hands, these works became the property of Mr. William Crawshay, Cyfarthfa. A tramroad was also made over the Rhigos to Glyn Neath, in order to convey the iron to the canal barges at the latter place.

In 1830 Mr. Crawshay bought the first steam engine, whose size can be imagined when its weight was only one ton and a half. Its appearance was thought a great wonder in the district. After again exchanging ownership, the works stopped, never to open again. Other works were those of Dinas, for the making of bricks, &c.. The limestone quarries of the district are numerous, and several are working at present, giving employment to many people.

A very valuable kind of silica is obtained from the Voel Mountain, near the village of Penderyn, and also at Dinas Rock. It was at first carried in sacks on pack-horses over the Dinas to Glyn Neath Canal. Afterwards, it was carried along the tramroad through Hirwain and Rhigos to the canal. In 1851, when the Vale of Neath Railway was constructed, the brickworks near Hirwain Station were opened, and are now in a flourishing condition. The special kind of sand produces bricks suitable for lining the inside of furnaces where very great heat exists. Ordinary bricks would not serve the purpose.

DINAS ROCK.

This is one of the chief wonders of South Wales. It stands not far from the village of Penderyn, to the west, and nature has covered the rugged head with moss and shrubs. On the southern side there is an immense head-rock—overlooking a rugged ravine—and which is called “The Wood Nymph’s Throne.” When the work of sand quarrying was commenced here, there were found several human bodies lying in the depths between the rocks. These were supposed to be the

bodies of travellers slain by brutal robbers who lurked about these parts.

In one of the caves of Dinas Rock (the legend states), Arthur and his soldiers lie sleeping with their swords grasped in their hands. They are thus ready to march forth to fight for the liberty and honour of Gwalia when the bell above them rings.

CHAPTER XVII.

EMINENT MEN OF PENDERYN.

REV. REYNALLT DAVIES, M.A.

This good man was born at Bodwigiad, in 1751. He received a first-class education in Christ College Brecon, where he became acquainted with Mr. Theophilus Jones, the historian. From here he went to Jesus College, Oxford, where he passed his examination for the degree of M.A. He did not remain long as a rector in the North of England, but undertook to be headmaster of a large public school near London—a position he filled with great success. After some years he bought the estate of Bodwigiad from Lord Jersey, in 1815. He died at the age of 69.

JENKIN HOWELL.

No name was better known in the district of Aberdare, and in South Wales generally, than that of Jenkin Howell, the Printer. He was born in a farmhouse, Tor Voel, in 1836. His father died when he was four years old, and although there were five other children, his widowed mother gave him the little education she could afford. However, at the age of ten he was put to learn the trade of shoemaker. At the age of twenty he left home for Merthyr, where he met the well-



JENKIN HOWELL.

known choir-leader Rosser Beynon. In a few years he settled in Trecynon as a shoemaker with a man named Edward Lloyd. Jenkin, however, was not satisfied with his humble lot, and, in order to push on, he took advantage of the night school in Ysgol Comin, under the charge of Mr. Dan Isaac Davies, B.Sc., as master, and Sir Marchant Williams, B.A. (then a pupil-teacher in the school).

He had more taste for books than for the cobbler's last, and very soon he learnt the trade of printer. In 1867 he had his own business, and had become a successful writer and poet. At the local eisteddfodau he took almost every prize he tried for. He was known as a very good musician and bard, as well as an able literary man. As a choir-leader also he became a great favourite. The Welsh newspaper "Y GWEITHIWR CYMRAEG" ("The Welsh Workman") was owned and edited by him. He was not a Welsh journalist of the first rank, but he wrote largely on the topics of the day. His successful essay on "The part taken by the Welsh in the War of the Roses," shows wide knowledge and much ability. All the Welsh magazines—from the humblest to the highest of them—on different occasions, contained something from his pen.

He was also a man of sterling qualities, and held the esteem and confidence of the various societies in the town. His keen judgment secured for him the position of Public Auditor, and the miners appointed him Auditor of the Miners' Provident Society. He was recognised also as an authority on Welsh literature and history. He died in 1902, and was buried in his native parish of Penderyn, in the Parish Church.

Other interesting persons of local fame were Gwilym Harri, a Welsh bard; Rev. Jenkin Thomas, Rev. William Powell, and William Morgan, the musician.

YSTRADFELLTE.

About five miles along the road from Penderyn lies, in a deep valley, this romantic little village. The scenery around here is pretty and very rugged along its craggy dingles and rocky dells. The steep slopes of the banks of the Mellte are thickly wooded, and the many renowned caves attract tourists from far and near. Artists tell us that a ramble among these fairy glens, a scramble over its rocky river beds, and an adventure into the caverns and under the majestic waterfalls, will give the tourist a rare series of nature's finest pictures.

The Vale of Mellte appears to have suffered much from some great and violent earthquake shocks. This, together with the effect of the water on the limestone rocks, will account for the many caves and ravines along the river's course. Similar effects are seen in the courses of the Neath and Pyrrddin, as well as in smaller streams. The chief attraction for visitors in the summer is, perhaps, the Porth Mawr—one of the largest caves in South Wales, and which lies about a mile below the village. We have taken the following description from another book: "When the river flows opposite the village of Ystradfellte it steals into a small whirlpool on the south bank, where it is lost. The channel, however, it pursues, except in the time of floods is seen dry, covered with stones, for about half a mile, till we come to a cave below, called Porth-yr-Ogof (Mouth of the Cave)."

Here, the banks on both sides are nearly precipitous. On entering the cavern beneath this huge rock as a mantelpiece over us, we are at once in a large room, whose floor is very irregular. At one time we can stand easily, at another we have to go on all-fours, crawling over some huge pieces of rock. We soon notice an immense hole above us like a *dome*, from

which hang long pieces formed by the chemical action of the water on the limestone above, and when a candle is lit in this underground room, these long pendants appear white, sparkling, and brilliant.

The murmur of the water is heard close by, and the river now drops into a tremendous pool, deep and black, the sight and sound make it horridly grand, and you shudder. Beyond this, there is another dismal pool with a rock above it, like the form of a naked child. This pool is, for that reason, called *Llyn-y-Baban* (The Baby's Pool). After this, the river is again lost for about one hundred and twenty yards, and re-appears, to wind its way through the darkness and gloom, where no footstep can follow, until it once more comes above ground to continue its course down for some miles to join the *Pyrddin*.

During heavy floods, the grim roar of these torrents, both above and below, can be heard for a great distance around. The boiling and seething of these phantom streams, can be better imagined than described. All around the mouth of the cave there are foam, vapour, and wild fury. Other fine waterfalls lower on the river are *Ysgwd Einon Gam* (Einon the Crooked Waterfalls), and *'Sgwd yr Eira* (The Waterfall of the Snow).

The other rivers in this neighbourhood have also falls that are visited by hundreds of people every summer.

CHAPTER XVIII.

YSTRADGYNLAIS.

The name Ystradgynlais seems to be derived from Ystrad—a vale—and “Gunleus,” or Gwnllys—a prince of Gwent, who married a daughter of Brychan. This district was her marriage portion.

The parish is an extensive one, covering an area of 21,954 acres, and abounds in place-names which connect it with two exceptional men of early times, viz., Caractacus, the British warrior, and the Apostle Paul of the New Testament.

Caradoc, or Caractacus, had a son named Cyllinus, and some say that Ystradcyllinus is an old form of Ystradgynlais—meaning the Vale of Cyllinus. Tradition says that Caradoc and his family resided in the valley, for the names of Hendre Gwladys, or Hendreladis, mean the home of Gwladys, the daughter of Caractacus. She accompanied her father and family to Rome, and was called by the Romans Claudia. Having become a Christian convert, she is referred to (according to some authorities) by the Apostle Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy.

Her husband, Rufus Pudens, is likely to be the person referred to in Romans xvi., 13, “Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.”

Now, Caractacus and his family were taken to Rome in A.D. 52, where they were converted to the Christian faith in 57 A.D., and in the year 59 Claudia and her husband returned to Britain. It is supposed that the Apostle Paul, in 60 A.D.,

YSTRADGYNLAIS.



visited this country, and during part of that time he stayed in Ystradgynlais with some of his converts, at such places as Hendre Caradoc, Cilybebyll, Cilfran, and Hendre Gwladys.

Not far from Hendre Caradoc there is a place known as Craig Pâl, supposed to be Craig Paul (Paul's Rock). Eglwys Caradoc (Church of Caradoc), at Abercrave, is another link in the chain of this interesting story. It is more correct to call the building a "hermitage," and here Prince Gunleus died in the arms of his son, Catwg, or Cadocus.

Ynyscedwyn is also connected with an old chieftain of some renown, named Edwyn, hence the name Ynyscedwyn. He was the son of a prince of Wales called Owain. Edwyn, in revenge for his father's murder by the men of Gwent, and to regain his lost possessions, joined the enemies of his country, and ravaged much of the counties of Cardigan, Carmarthen, and Brecknock. Several places are connected with his residence in, or his march through, these districts.

The families of the Awbreys and Goughs of Ynyscedwyn, the Prices of Glynllech, and the Gwyns of Abercrave, have been very prominent in the history of our county. The Awbreys and Gwyns have supplied several of the High Sheriffs to the county.

Ystradgynlais, from very early times, abounded in mineral wealth, and as early as 1612 there were ironworks at Ynyscedwyn, for a piece of iron bearing that date was found in a cinder bed in the year 1695. In 1628 Mr. Brunton, of London, erected furnaces, &c., in the district. The works are now, however, in ruins.

YSTRADGYNLAIS DISTRICT.

This hilly district, in the extreme south-west, promises to

become a very prosperous and populous part of the county owing to the coal mines around.

It lies in the upper part of the Vale of Tawe, reaching up past Abercrave and Ty'nycoed to Colbren and Penwyllt. There is not much natural beauty about the neighbourhood, although as we go from Ystradgynlais across the valley to Lower Cwmtwrch, we see a few miles of well-wooded and rural landscape. These villages, however, are in a deep valley. The two valleys of the Twrch and Tawe unite near Ystalyfera, lower down the Swansea Valley.

The Lower Cwmtwrch Valley is one of the narrowest we have ever seen for a district with such a population and trade. High hills, with trees covering them, flank the valley, and, in some places, there is hardly space for the river, road, and railway.

In fact, the road is a curious sight, crossing and re-crossing the railway and river in order to get into the valley above. It taxes the nerve of a strong man to pass through the gap along the road on a dark, stormy night up the valley, with the torrent roaring alongside of you and the dismal black hills on each side. As we proceed into the middle and upper parts of the valley we are agreeably surprised to see such fine shops and dwellings. There is here a large colliery population carrying on a very busy trade.

There are several places connected with one another in and around this colliery district. Colbren, Ty'nycoed, Ystradgynlais, Ynyscedwyn, and Lower Cwmtwrch.

A fine sight in the Upper Valley of the Tawe is the mansion of Craig-y-Nos, the residence of Madame Patti. The castle is twenty-one miles from Swansea. The nearest station is Penwyllt, now called Craig-y-Nos, on the Neath and Brecon Railway, and is eight hundred feet

above the sea-level. The castle is on a plateau one hundred feet above the Vale of Tawe. Its name, "Craig-y-Nos" ("The rock of the night") is perhaps a suitable one, owing to the dark mountains around. It is a spot away from the din of people and the hum of industry. Loneliness has a charm for the fair songstress.

The castle was built in 1842 by Mr. Rhys Davies Powell, an antiquary of repute, the sale of whose curios and art treasures occupied many days.

CRAY RESERVOIR AND TUNNEL WORKS.

This reservoir, the largest in the county, is the property of the Corporation of Swansea. The bleak moorland hills of our country, that appear worthless and barren, with no human dwelling near, serve, after all, a useful purpose in providing our big towns with a supply of pure water—an absolute necessity for the welfare of the people.

The waterworks are situated near Cray Station, on the Neath and Brecon Railway, in the Black Mountains, which are a part of the Beacons' Range. These must not be confused with the Black Mountains near Talgarth. The area of the reservoir is one hundred acres, and the chief feeders which drain the hills around for about 2,640 acres are the Gihirych and Blaen Cray Streams. They stand at an elevation of 1,000ft. above the sea-level, and the rainfall in 1907 was 75.40 inches.

The capacity of the reservoir is a thousand million gallons, and the cost, including the reservoir tunnel, and the pipe-line to Swansea, was about £547,000; for the water passes directly from the reservoir through a tunnel two miles and threequarters in length, and from the tunnel to Swansea there is a pipe-track of twenty-three and a half miles.



CRAIG-Y-NOS.

The whole of the works lies in the parish of Cray, and the reservoir supplies Swansea and district with water.

CHAPTER XIX.

PARISH OF LLYWEL.

This parish is situated in the western part of the county, on the borders of Carmarthenshire, and is bounded by the River Usk on the south. The village, also of the same name, lies on the side of the turnpike road from London to Milford through Brecon. It is about a mile from Trecastle. The parish is very hilly and wooded, the highest peak being Trecastle Mountain. Its name is taken from a nephew of Rhys Ap Tewdwr—Idio Wyllt (The Wild). Prince Rhys gave him the parish for assisting him to put down the rebellion of his subjects. In order to make his claim and power greater among the natives, Idio married the daughter of Bleddyn Ap Maenarch, the Prince of Brycheiniog.

The hilly nature of the district made it easy for Idio to defend it, and for that purpose he kept a powerful force on the heights around. So strong was his position that he could easily withstand any attacks made upon it either from Carmarthenshire or Brecknockshire, and when the Norman Bernard Newmarch conquered the rest of the county, Llywel remained as an independent district—defying even the great conqueror.

Llywel Church is, according to Giraldus, of very ancient date—the first building being burnt down by a contending army. The present one was built in 1869, at a cost of £1,160. It stands on the right-hand side of the road to Llandovery, and is practically the last building you pass for some miles in this direction.

The Via Julia, the Roman road from Carmarthen, passed through the parish, and the Roman remains dug out in the parish show that these people at one time played a prominent part in the history of the district. Trecastle Mountain shows signs of a very large Roman camp—a larger one even than that at Bannium.

TRECASTLE.

Following the turnpike road from Brecon to the west, through the beautiful Vale of the Usk, we first reach the village of Senny Bridge, eight miles from the County town. This is one of the finest cycle rides in the county—the road being almost level all the way, and shaded with grand trees



TRECASTLE.

overlooking the richly-wooded vale. Beyond Senny Bridge the road rises steadily for three miles, until the highest point is reached, not far from Trecastle, which is twelve miles from Brecon.

The road now suddenly passes down a steep hill, and on each side of it this quiet country village is built.

There was a close connection between Llywel and Brecon ; for the town of Llywel was called Trecastle Ward—one of the twelve wards of that borough until 1885, when it ceased to return a member to Parliament.

This spot is perhaps one of the most interesting in the county to the historian. Several families of note lived here in the old times. Among them we may mention Sir Watkin Llwyd, a brave knight at Agincourt, who fought side by side, in 1415, with Sir Dafydd Gam, who was knighted by Henry V.

Einion Sais is said to be buried at a place called Craig Einon, in Llywel.

The Gwyns also lived here like barons, and on Sundays and holy days they were rowed in a grand pleasure-boat on the lake to Llywel Church. This lake, it is said, was on the side of the turnpike road, to the west of Trecastle. The Penrys were descended from Elystan Glodrydd, "one of the four great families of the county." The Rev. Hugh Penry, who built Llwynycntefn, married Anne, sister of James Howell, the traveller, of whom further account will be given.

DEFYNOCK.

The name Defynôck may be derived from Dyfnog, a patron saint ; Tref Dyfnog—the town of Dyfnog ; or from the same word as Devon, which again is from Dyfnoc, meaning a district of narrow glens and pointed hills ; this last explanation well describes the district, but as St. Cynog is the patron saint of the church, the parish is most probably named after him. The village is nine miles from Brecon, and nestles on the hillside, with a view in front of it of wooded knolls and winding vales. The railway station of the same name is on the Neath & Brecon Railway.

THE GREAT FOREST OF DEFYNOCK.

This extensive district, comprising in its limits the parish of Defynock and other parts of the country around, seems to have formed a separate manor, even when Bernard Newmarch had conquered the county. His successors held this separately from the Crown of England. The feudal Barons used it as a great hunting park, and called it the Manor of the Great Forest. The tenants of the farms were all compelled to bring their corn to certain appointed mills, of which there were seven—the property of the lords, who thus received all the profits from their use. There are also signs of a fortress on the banks of the Senny close by, called “Y Castell Du” (“The Black Castle”), where, it is supposed, Sir Reginald Aubrey, one of the companions of Newmarch, dwelt.

The men from the mountains—robbers as they were then described, pounced upon the vale farms and carried off much spoil. When, however, they could be captured, the dungeon of the Black Castle was ready to lodge them. Several eminent persons, although not natives of the district, have linked their names with it. Among them may be mentioned Mr. Story-Maskelyne, a very learned man, Professor at Oxford, and a keeper of the Mineral Department of the British Museum.

The Rev. Moses Williams, Vicar of Defynock, was a very learned antiquary, and was the first copyist of the MSS. of the oldest Welsh literature.

At the time of the Battle of Waterloo a number of French prisoners of war were placed as hostages at Bailie; and the Rev. John Wesley, during his last visit to South Wales, made the place his headquarters.

“Parry of Llywel,” as he was familiarly called, although

a Cardigan man by birth, must be connected with the parish. Few names in the Church of Wales are more honoured than that of Parry. His preaching had an extraordinary power over the people, but his lofty character spoke even louder than his preaching. His silvery voice won for him the name of "Y Gloch Arian" (The Silver Bell).

His remains lie buried in Defynock Churchyard, and his memory is cherished by a scholarship of £20 at Lampeter College.



· SENNYBRIDGE.

The two Roman roads, a British camp, "Cefn-y-Gaer," and numerous Carneddau, and a golden eagle dug up in this district, add much to the historical interest of the place.

The Rev. T. Rees, D.D., the well-known Calvinistic Methodist preacher, was a native of Defynock.

SENNY BRIDGE.

This village is on the main road from Brecon, about a mile from Defynock, and presents a typical aspect of a populous country village.

CHAPTER XX.

SAINT ILLTYD.

The churches dedicated to this patron saint are three in the county, and the fame of this good and able man claims a notice of his work while we are in the parish of Defynock.

His fame rests on the religious work which he carried out. In the early part of the sixth century, he established a college, or school, attended by over two thousand students at Llan-twit Major, in Glamorganshire. To accommodate them there were four hundred lodging-houses and seven large halls. This great early British University, for so it might be called in those days, was the largest of its kind on record, at least, in this country. Even foreign princes and students from distant parts of the world attended, and not only were they taught sacred and other subjects, but also husbandry and other useful arts. He introduced an improved method of ploughing, and his memory is hallowed for having conferred great blessings on the Cymry. It is said that he lies buried near the church which bears his name in this county, at a place called "Bedd Gwyl Illtyd" ("The "Watchgrave of Illtyd"), from the custom of watching there during the night previous to the saint's day.

PARISH OF LLANSPYDDYD.

This parish, which is two miles west from Brecon town, contains the hamlet of Modrydd. The church is surrounded by some majestic yew trees. Among the graves in the

churchyard are those of Richard Hall, the Brecknockshire poet, who died in 1866, aged 49.

There is also a rude cross within a ring, and three smaller rings, which is one of the oldest in the county. There is no writing on it, but some say that it marks the grave of either Brychan, Prince of Brecknock, or that of Anlach, his father.

The historic person named Einon Sais (Einon the Saxon), served under Edward III. in the battle of Crecy, in 1346, and at Poitiers, in 1356. Llewelyn, grandson of Einon Sais, was the father of Sir Dafydd Gam.

Einon was the second son of Rhys ab Hywel, Lord of Aberllyfni. Having become very wealthy he built the castle called after his name. It stood in the parish of Llanspyddyd, upon the side of a little brook, which joins the Usk near Capel-y-Bettws, by Penpont. It was very likely destroyed by Owen Glyndwr, because it was one of Sir Dafydd Gam's castles.

The Lordship of Einon extended along the banks of the Usk from Llywel parish to the town of Brecon, a distance of twelve miles.

Vicar Gwyn, of Llanspyddyd—Thomas Williams by name—claimed descent from the same ancestors as the mother of Queen Elizabeth, and stoutly defended the Protestant religion. As he first introduced the use of the surplice in the Church service, he was called "Ficer Gwyn Llanspyddyd" ("The White Vicar of Llanspyddyd").

The fine mansion of Abercamlais is decorated with very old oak carvings, and there is preserved in it a dress of rich yellow silk embroidered with gold and silver, supposed to have belonged to Queen Elizabeth. The letter E worked all over it seems to prove that it is a relic of those historic days, and is a treasured heirloom. Abercamlais was the

residence of the Rev. Preb. Garnons Williams, of beloved memory, who died in 1908.

Penpont mansion, with its beautiful lawns and extensive plantations, adorns the banks of the Usk. There are valuable paintings of Anne Boleyn, Anne of Cleves, and Oliver Cromwell to be seen here, and the late Mr. Penry Williams, one of the descendants of the first owner, was the author of a fine volume describing his two years' travels, called "Recollections of Malta, Sicily, and the Continent." Not only was the author an interesting writer, but also a splendid judge of paintings, and a man of great culture. The Williamses of Penpont and Abercamlais are the representatives in the male line of the Bullens, being directly descended from Sir Richard Bullen, the Norman knight, who accompanied Bernard Newmarch, when he settled in Breconshire.

CHAPTER XXI

THE HUNDRED OF PENCELLI, OR PENKELLY.

This lies to the west of the hundred of Crickhowell, and contains the parishes of Llanddetty, Llansantffread, Llangasty-Talyllyn, Llandefaelogtre'rgraig, Llanywern, Llanfillo, Talachddu, Llanhamlach, Llanfigan, Llanfrynach, Cantref, and Vaynor.

The Hundred consists chiefly of mountain land (the Beacons Range and the Trefil Mountain), with the Vale of the Usk running across in the north. Two very prominent peaks are seen near Talybont, well-wooded to the summit. One stands on the east, overlooking Llanddetty Church, and stretching over to Bwlch. On the slopes of this mountain range, and overlooking the vale, stands the beautiful mansion of Buckland, with a fine background of tall trees. The grounds extend for about two miles, and are some of the prettiest in the county.

Another lofty wooded peak stands opposite the village of Talybont, with Llangorse Lake washing its base on the other side. It is known as the Allt, or Allt-Villo, and on its summit are the remains of a large British Camp. The view from the top is worth the trouble of climbing up.

The largest place in the Pencelly Hundred is Cefn Coed-y-Cymmer, at the extreme south-west corner, and bordering Glamorganshire. Other villages are Talybont, Llanfrynach, Llangorse, Llangasty-Talyllyn.

The Brecon & Merthyr Railway comes through Cefn and

along the side of the Tâf Fechan Valley to Torpantau, where it reaches the highest point. Here it passes through a tunnel and issues out at the other end into the Glyn Valley, a very well known and pretty district much visited by the Merthyr and Dowlais people in summer. The run from the tunnel for about nine miles is down a steady incline to the village of Talybont. The stream at the bottom of the valley is called the Carfanell, and is a splendid trout stream to its junction with the Usk.

THE TAF FECHAN (THE LITTLE TAFF) VALLEY.

This valley is about 10 miles long from the slopes of the Beacons to the junction of the two rivers, Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan (Great and Little Taff), in Glamorganshire, at the Cyfarthfa Iron and Steel Works, and lies, generally speaking, in a north-easterly direction. The only village seen in it is called the Garn (Cairn), or Ponsticill, standing on high ground on its right bank, about four miles from Cefn Coed, and having a population of about 160 people, chiefly quarrymen. Walking along the winding country-road from Cefn, we make our way, with the slopes of Cilsanws Mountain on our left, through a pretty rural spot shaded by some fine trees.

We soon pass the Vaynor Limestone Quarries, the property of Messrs. Guest, Keen & Co., and from which furnaces at Cyfarthfa used to get their supply for the purpose of smelting the ore.

The Glais Dingle, which we cross, is a typical little glen—abundantly wooded and containing some rather attractive caves. Pontsarn, or Pontysarnhir (The Bridge of the Long Road) is close by on our road, and is a small knoll overlooking the very deep and craggy channel of the River Taf Fechan. A branch of a Roman road passes through here

from Caerphilly, on its way to the old camp on the Beacons. Crowds of trippers and holiday-makers are to be seen strolling about here on fine summer days.

Overlooking it on the other side of the river are the ruins of an old Norman castle, standing on the top of the limestone hill—a capital site for such a fortress. From there an exten-



DIAL.—ON A FARMHOUSE—RHIWYRYCHAIN, NEAR PONSTICILL.

sive view is seen in all directions, and it would be a difficult task for an enemy to storm it against the garrison inside. It is called Morlais Castle.

As we proceed on our way, the road is now along more open country, and on our right is a nook, in which stands the quaint old Parish Church of Vaynor. It is said that the first Vaynor Church was built in 714 A.D., and was burnt down by the Normans from Morlais Castle in 1291, but rebuilt in 1295. The present church was opened on June 1st, 1870, having been built solely at the expense of Mr. Robert Thompson Crawshay, of Cyfarthfa Castle. The old tower now standing is supposed to be a relic of the church built in 714. Among the stones in the churchyard is a huge granite slab, seven tons in weight, on the grave of Mr. Crawshay.

Passing through Ponsticill village we are now on the open mountain, with the valley widening out to a much greater extent on our right. Descending with the road into the valley, we observe that the soil is of a reddish colour, being sandstone, which is the chief formation of the Beacons.

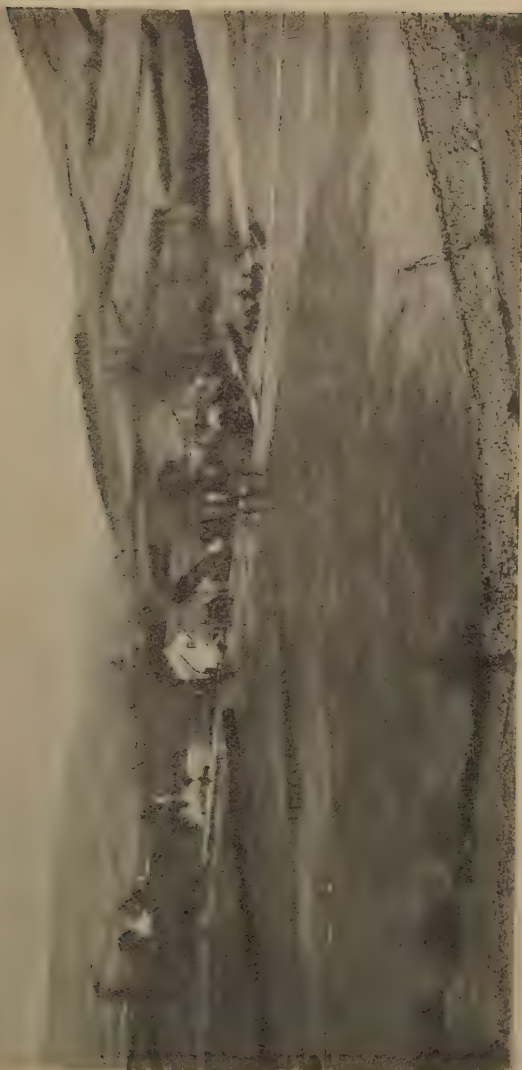
About two miles from Ponsticill we reach the first of the three reservoirs before us. This is called the Pentwyn, or Dolygaer Reservoir. It is a fine sheet of water, and serves as a little seaside spot for the townspeople of the "Works." In summer boating is enjoyed, and the angler soon forgets his toil and worry in the balmy breezes and peace of this charming spot.

Pentwyn (or Dolygaer Lake) is one of the largest reservoirs in the county, and has an area of ninety-six acres, and stands at an elevation of 1,080ft. above the sea-level. It is over a mile in length, and has a width of nearly a quarter of a mile. Boating and fishing are permitted. The reservoir serves as a supply of compensation water for the Cyfarthfa Iron and Steel Works.

Above this reservoir are two others of more recent construction—called, respectively, the Upper and Lower Neuadd

—both being really on the southern slopes of the Beacons. The upper, at an elevation of 1,506ft., has an area of fifty-eight acres, the lower thirteen acres at an elevation of 1,483ft. These two lakes supply the borough of Merthyr Tydfil with water for domestic purposes.

The watershed serving the three lakes extends over five thousand acres, the total cost of these lakes is about £380,000. The rain gauge at the foot of the Beacons recorded a rainfall of 92 inches in the year 1907, the heaviest record in the county.



ABERCRIHAN FARM (TAF FECHAN VALLEY).

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TAF FAWR VALLEY.

Another valley opening into Cefn Coed is that of the Taf Fawr, to the west of the Taf Fechan Valley. Its length from Cefn to the highest point of the turnpike road to Brecon, which passes through the valley is eight miles, and the descent on the other side to the town of Brecon is about the same distance. In some parts this valley is very narrow, there being only a meadow's width in addition to the road and river. A huge overhanging rocky mountain on one side, called Craig Fawr Cilsanws, is over 1,400ft. high. Some of the old people of Cefn, recalling the stirring times of the Chartists, say that in order to prevent a company of soldiers from Brecon reaching Merthyr to quell the riots, a number of daring spirits had settled on the top of Graig Fawr, and rolled great boulders into the valley beneath. The red-coats had to cross the valley to the other side in order to reach their destination.

This pretty valley, in its lower parts, shows striking proofs of the action of some forces of nature, that some time or other, brought about here great changes. The two rocks on opposite sides of the valley, Y Graig Fawr and Penmoel-allt (The bare top of the forest) were at one time united, for the strata show them to be of the same formation. It is likely that a mighty earthquake split the rock and thus formed the valley. The force of the shock and its effects are sufficient to account for the immense loose stones to be found scattered on the top and sides of the mountain. These immense boulders show signs of fire, and are known as

“plum-pudding” stones. A peculiar kind of slaked limestone is also found in layers just below the surface of the mountain sides. The effects of fire are also seen in this.

THE CARDIFF CORPORATION WATERWORKS.

These consist of two very fine sheets of water, and lie in this valley. It is an agreeable change to the eye of the traveller to see the immense stone embankments, with the surface of the water dammed in by them, while all around are the bleak, treeless mountain sides.

One is reminded in looking at these fine reservoirs of the fact that the busy town of Cardiff is solely dependent for this great necessity of life—pure water—on the lonely and bare mountain slopes of the Beacons, thirty-two miles away. The cloud and the mountain are the great benefactors of our large towns.

NO 1. THE BEACONS RESERVOIR is the larger of the two, and is 1,340ft. above the sea-level. The highway road to Brecon travels along its side, and from the upper end of the lake to “Story Arms” (a wayside inn) the distance is about one mile. From here the road begins to descend in a curve for nine miles to Brecon. The ridge of the watershed is half-way between Merthyr and Brecon. The area of this reservoir is fifty-one acres, with a depth of fifty-two feet, and a capacity for 345 million gallons of water.

NO. 2. CANTREF RESERVOIR is about one mile to the south of No. 1, and is not quite so large, but deeper, its area of water being about forty-two acres, with a capacity for 322 million gallons of water. It stands 1073ft. above the sea level, while the No. 1 Reservoir is 1340ft. above the sea. The steep bare slopes of the Beacons form a splendid gathering ground for these reservoirs, its total area being 4,000 acres.

The rainfall at the Beacons station for 1907 was 81.92 inches. The Taf Fawr passes through both on its way to join the Taf Fechan, near Cefn Coed.

The Cardiff Corporation are constructing a third and larger reservoir—as big as both No. 1 and No. 2 together. This will be also in the Taf Fawr and nearer to Cefn Coed.

A drainage area of 6,400 acres has been taken, and a very large reservoir will soon be constructed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CEFN COED-Y-CYMMER.

This populous village, situated on the borders of Glamorganshire, is known by two other names—Cefn and Cefn Coed—the latter being also the postal name. The full name, however, is written in old documents. It is thus explained : Cefn—back ; Coed—wood ; Cymmer—confluence ; and this means “ The Wooded Ridge near the Confluence.” The two rivers, Great Taff and Little Taff, meet a few hundred yards below. It is said, that at one time the district was covered with trees.

It stands on the southern slopes of the Cilsanws Mountain, with the two valleys, those of Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan, separating it from Glamorganshire. It is thus naturally well-drained and pleasantly situated.

The railway station is about 600ft. above the sea-level, while the Cilsanws Mountain rises to a height of 1,430ft. The population of the place is over 3,500, and the people are chiefly employed in the ironworks or in the collieries of the adjoining county.

Entering Cefn from Merthyr Tydfil, which is about a mile away by road, we cross the Little Taff, and proceed along High Street, which leads to Brecon. It is not a modern place, as is seen in the interesting cottage designs along the main street. They indicate that the village is not in its young days.



CEFN-COED-Y-CYMMER (FROM CYFARTHFA CASTLE.)

The railway from Merthyr to Cefn is carried over the valley by a fine stone viaduct of 16 arches, having a span of forty feet each, and in the middle of the stream the height is one hundred and twenty feet. It was erected in 1866.

In the good old coaching days, Cefn was a well-known halting place on the way to Brecon. Those who recall the days of sixty years ago, draw a dark picture of the village life. It was then notorious for brutal pastimes, which sometimes ended in drunken riots, and even in loss of life.

On the side of High Street is a spot locally known as the 'Stocks.' Long ago, there was a pair of stocks fixed here, which were used to confine prisoners.

A Cefn resident, we are told, in those days owned a very famous large mastiff—the hero of a thousand fights—and many a brave assailant was let into the ring only to fall a victim to the invincible champion. Happily, however, the social and moral life of the village has long been re-claimed from such sordid pastimes.

From the town of Brecon, Cefn is twenty-one miles distant by rail, and about sixteen miles by road. The L. & N.W. Ry. and the B. & M. Ry. connect it with Merthyr, and electric cars travel between the two places.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EMINENT MEN OF THE VAYNOR PARISH.

THOMAS AUBREY.

In the village of Cefn Coed there can be seen to-day a Wesleyan Chapel—Thomas Aubrey's Memorial Chapel—built in 1876. This shows that Aubrey was a man of more than ordinary fame in that denomination.

Although he could boast neither of wealth nor trace his descent from the old Norman family to which he undoubtedly belonged, still Thomas Aubrey was one of Breconshire's gifted sons. His story is that of so many poor boys; for he became, through hard work and natural talents, one of the foremost of Welsh preachers of his day.

Thomas was the eldest son of Thomas and Ann Aubrey, simple folk living in a humble cottage in the village. His father was employed in the Cyfarthfa Ironworks, and was a faithful member of the Wesleyan Church. His parents were thus able to give their boy the education that the only day schools of the neighbourhood could provide. When Thomas was about seven years old, his parents removed to Nantyglo, in 1815, and here he was sent to a school carried on in an old chapel, whose furniture included a pulpit, a "big pew," and a few broken benches, which were turned into desks by the pupils kneeling down in front of them when any writing had to be done. The master, in his former employment, had had the misfortune to lose a limb, which was replaced by a wooden

leg. When in school the master took off his leg and put it aside.

The boys thought that the hazel rod came more heavily and oftener on their backs than they deserved, and so a council of war was held, in which it was agreed to play a trick upon the master in return for his harsh treatment.



THOMAS AUBREY.

Thomas Aubrey was the greatest sufferer, and so he was the most fit and proper person to carry out the plot.

One morning, after the master had settled down as usual

in school, and a number of scholars surrounded him in the "big pew," repeating their lessons, Thomas, seizing the wooden leg which the master had taken off, carried it shoulder-high out towards the door. This was a signal for a general spree. Now the tables were turned upon the monarch. He could not move without his wooden leg, and the boys marched about the school carrying the "piece of timber and straps" on their shoulders. Fearing that the procession would go out into the streets, the master accepted the terms offered by the other side; namely, a general pardon and a holiday on the morrow.

Thomas was quick at his books, and became the top boy in the school. He was now ten years of age.

Those times were hard times in the country. The great wars on the Continent disturbed the iron and coal trade, and made bread and other articles of food very dear. There was also much unrest in the country, and many a working man found it difficult to make "two ends meet."

The neighbours made their boys at ten help the father to provide for the rest of the family; and Thomas was considered a good scholar, so that the lad had to join his father in a job at the furnace in the ironworks. Other boys were employed around him, who were blown out with rude pomp and with big ideas—so common to lads just entering upon their freedom and earning money of their own.

Thomas was not long among them before they decided to find out what stuff he was made of. The bigger ones often played the part of the "bully" on the weaker ones, and Thomas could never rest without protecting the weak. In fact, Thomas was a true *hero*, and despised tyranny and cruelty. He was, however, no better in his habits and conduct than the rest of these wicked boys working around him,

and, almost unknown to himself, he had become the champion fighter of the place.

On a Sunday morning, as the result of a quarrel with a "bully," who had attacked a younger lad, a meeting was arranged in a field between Thomas and this fellow in a lonely spot, when the dispute was to be settled by a fair fight. Our hero was there at the appointed time waiting for the "bully," who, however, thought it wiser to keep away, so he never turned up. After this, Thomas Aubrey's fame was settled. Not one of the boys ever after this disputed his right.

Returning home from the field, he was passing the small Wesleyan Chapel, when he heard singing. Out of curiosity he entered, and sat on a bench near the door. The minister was preaching from the text, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." He was not long there before the hero felt that he had met his *match*. The sermon seemed to be intended for him—his own life was vividly pictured in the words of the preacher. The blows upon him seemed to become heavier one after the other, and still he could not get up to go out. The Lord had gripped him, and he realised the power that worked upon him. His sins became a strange and awful reality in his feelings. At the close he remained to tell the little flock that he gave himself to the Lord as a penitent sinner, who had resolved to give up his old life and consecrate himself to the Master's service. A few hours earlier in the day he scoffed at religion, but now he remained to pray. The news of the change in Tom Aubrey was the village gossip, but he never wavered in his decision. He set out on a career, bold and brave, a greater champion than ever, but now in the service of the Master.

His old comrades in the mill made him a target for their scorn and mockery, but he bravely bore the treatment like

a Christian, and soon convinced them that a very great change had taken place in his life.

On a Sabbath afternoon, his old comrades, as usual had some serious trouble, and in their drunken bouts one of them was very seriously wounded, and was carried home, as they thought, to die. The poor fellow begged Aubrey to come to pray with him, and from that day, the neighbours seemed to dread mocking the young convert. His meekness had conquered them.

He was now fifteen years of age, and set in earnest to equip himself for the great work of his life, by hard study at home in the little cottage. Every spare moment at the furnace, he would sit down in the din and rattle of the wheels, and read. As the sponge absorbs the water, so Thomas Aubrey eagerly and easily mastered book after book. There was no occasion for him to read a book more than once to know it. His genius soon showed itself, and, finding it impossible to avail himself of the training of a university, he set to arranging a course of study for himself under the guidance of the leaders of the denomination. He spent his money on books, and his spare moments on reading them, and Wales to-day has no better example of a self-taught man than Thomas Aubrey.

Before the age of sixteen he was preaching, and the people recognised at once a man of great natural ability—his fiery spirit and flow of language made his preaching like a mighty current of burning words.

Like a star, he had quickly risen high in the firmament of the denomination.

The District Meeting of the Wesleyans—the Synod—met in Llanidloes, in 1827, where students were examined. Aubrey easily passed, and impressed the examiners much by his

work. Henceforth he was ordained a minister and set out to take charge of a circuit. From this time his fame as a preacher increased steadily, until he attained to the highest position in the denomination. Perhaps no man ever worked harder than Thomas Aubrey. The great demand for his services and the burning zeal of his heart, when serving the cause of the Master, told heavily upon his bodily frame. A special feature of his work, which also wore away his physical strength, was the system of travelling by which the denomination carry out the work of preaching. And also the business work, was very heavy to the Chairman of the District. This good man, after a life full of very hard work, died in Rhyl, Nov 15, 1867, at the early age of sixty years.

JOHN LLEWELLYN ("SION LLEWELYN")

Born at Cefn Coed in the year 1690, he lived to the ripe age of eighty-six, and died in the year 1776. He wrote several good hymns, and published his "Poems and Hymns" even to a fourth edition in 1791. He describes his religious views in verse, and gives also in poetry an account of his life. After listening to a sermon, he would give a good summary of it all in verse.

Among the interesting persons hailing from Vaynor Parish may be mentioned Hywel Rhys o Flaên Glais, a very humorous and descriptive poet. His chief poem "Can y Daearfochyn" ("Song of the Badger") was well-known to the country-folk of his day, who looked upon Rhys as a poet worthy of a "crown" and "a chair." He was born in 1699.

Here is one stanza (translated from the Welsh) describing how, after being chased for a long distance, the badger at last is killed :—

Though keen were his weapons and great was his strength,
Our lads and our dogs overcame him at length,
An attempt to return eased his pain and our strife,
For near Llidiart (gate) Gelli he ended his life;
So with loud shouts of joy to each other we call,
And together rejoice at the enemy's fall;
And while each felt his weight he exclaimed with surprise
Ne'er badger was seen of such wonderful size.

The name of a farmhouse in Vaynor Parish, Maes-y-Vaenor (The Vaynor Battlefield) reminds us of a great battle that took place here in early times.

The name of the Rev. Owen Evans, for twenty-eight years (1837-65) pastor of the Unitarian Church at Cefn Coed, is widely known. He kept a school here preparing young men for the Christian Ministry. His successor was the Rev. J. Hathren Davies, who for thirty-three years (1877-1910) served his church as a pastor, and Vaynor Parish as a public man, successfully. Both these men were highly esteemed, and their good work will long be remembered. One of the incumbents of Vaynor was the Rev. Rees Williams. For forty-four years he served his parish. He was deeply revered by the parishioners, especially by the young, in whose welfare he took the deepest interest.

CHAPTER XXV.

TALYBONT (BRIDGEND).

This pretty village stands on the banks of the Carfanell, which flows down the well-known Glyn Valley, and into the Usk about six miles from Brecon. Coming by train from the "Mountains," we descend over 1,200ft., and at last come to Talybont Station. Looking around this spot, on a summer's day, we get one of the unique views in the county. It is at once seen that we are on level ground, surrounded on all sides, except towards Llanfrynach, by nature's ramparts. The wooded Bwlch Mountain forms the buttress on the south; the Allt to the east, and the Glyn Valley and the hills on the west complete the boundary. Some very rich meadows stretch around us, with mansions and substantial farmhouses dotting the view—Buckland, Cui, Coedty, and Maesmawr—and in the distance are seen the ruins of Pencelli Castle.

The canal, passing along high above the road near the village, the River Usk, winding its course to the other side of the scene, the charming little Church of Llansantffread, where the *Silurist* is buried in the churchyard, all these together, combine with the meadows and trees to complete a picture of much beauty. The road from Llangynidr passes the village, on through Llanfrynach to Brecon. The spot is an ideal one for a day's holiday in the country, and, if you are an angler; you have some of the best water for trout and salmon.

The antiquary and historian also can find in this pleasant spot much to interest him, for the Roman road passes through the adjoining parish, on to Brecon, and the historic Scethrog is close by, linked with the name of the Picards, whose family connections form such an important feature in the history of the county. The Picard family, who came over with the tide of Norman nobles, owned the Lordship and Manor of Scethrog, having received it from the famed Bernard Newmarch, the conqueror of Breconshire.

The ancient mansion had walls eight to nine feet thick.

PENCELLI OR PENCELLY CASTLE.

Pencelli is another of the Norman Castles, and is situated on an eminence overlooking the beautiful Vale of Usk, about two miles from the village of Talybont. It was very likely built to defend the Manor of Pencelli, and was occupied by the Lord of that Manor. The exact date of its erection cannot be decided.

This large district of Pencelli was divided in the reign of Edward I. into two parts, called English and Welsh Pencelli, and afterwards into five lordships. Very little remains of the first castle. But some walls of the old mansion of the Herberts still stand. Extensive alterations and additions were made to it from time to time. It is now a farmhouse

The great strength of the walls of the castle shows that at one time it was a very secure defence from attacks that might be made upon the family and garrison dwelling there. Some very fine old trees are to-day to be seen on this spot, and it is likely that the name, Pen-celli—"Top of the Woods"—was given to the castle from the abundance of trees growing on the high ground on which it stands.

Its importance as a fortress, however, seems to have been

little since the year 1326, when this and other castles were vested in the Crown. At different times it was owned by Thomas Powell, of Llanishen; Thomas Jeffreys, the Tower, Scethrog; the Joneses and the Gwynnes of Buckland.

After it ceased to serve as a fortress, the castle became a mansion, occupied by the Herberts, and other county families.

Cui, Coedty, and Blaen-nant, three other fine mansions in the Parish of Llanfigan, were inhabited by the families of Games, Jones, and Williams.

It is interesting to know that in the Llanfigan Churchyard the remains of William Morris of Blaen-nant lie. He was the grandfather of the famous Carmarthenshire poet and author, Sir Lewis Morris, who wrote the "Epic of Hades," &c.

CANTREF.

This parish is situated along the Usk, and adjoins the previous parishes just mentioned. In shape it is an oblong, about two miles wide and nearly fifteen miles long. It includes the lofty Beacons Range, and extends into the valleys of Taf Fechan and Taf Fawr.

Among the eminent families who have flourished may be mentioned the WynTERS, Aubreys and Powells.

The church is romantically situated on the left bank of the River Cynrig, and is surrounded by stately trees.

CHAPTER XXVI.

EMINENT MEN OF CANTREF PARISH.

WILLIAM AUBREY, D.C.L.

He was the son of Thomas Aubrey, a doctor of Cantref. William became a famous scholar. After a successful career at Oxford, he rose into great eminence, as shown by the high positions he occupied.

He was Doctor of Civil Law; Principal of a College in Oxford; a Judge of the Queen's Army in France, and Master of the Court of Requests to Queen Elizabeth. At different times he had grants of lands in this county.

He died in 1595, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

HENRY VAUGHAN (SILURIST).

This fine poet comes from the Vaughans of Tretower, who, at one time, had very extensive possessions in the county of Brecknock. Some of his ancestors had fought in the Battle of Agincourt.

Henry and Thomas, twin-brothers, were born in 1621, at Newton, Scethrog, in the parish of Llansantffread. Henry and his brother, at eleven years of age, were sent to the Rector of Llangattock to be prepared for one of the Universities. At the age of seventeen they entered Jesus College, Oxford. It was their lot to grow up in very turbulent times, when the ill-feeling between the King and his Parliament divided the country into two sections. Civil War

broke out in 1642, the two fighting parties being known as the Parliamentarians and the Royalists, or the Roundheads and the Cavaliers.

The Vaughan family was closely connected with the nobility of the land, and openly took up the cause of the unfortunate King Charles.

Henry left the University without taking his degree, though later in life, he took the degree of M.D., and went to London to study for the Bar. Returning to his native county, on the Civil War breaking out, he settled at Newton, and here most of his life was spent as a poet and doctor. In 1646, he published a volume of *Poems*, followed in 1650 by *Silex Scintillans*, and in 1651 by *Olor Iscanus*. The second part of *Silex Scintillans* appeared in 1655, and *Thalia Rediviva* in 1678. He also wrote volumes of meditations and devotions in prose called "*The Mount of Olives*" and "*Flores Solitudinares*." All his works are now extremely rare in their original editions, but there are several cheap reprints of his books. He died 23rd April, 1695, and was buried at Llansantffread; his tombstone, bearing an inscription written by himself, was recently restored, and a marble tablet to his memory has been erected in the church.

THOMAS BEVAN, THE BARD.

Maesmawr Mill, near Talybont, was the birthplace of this poet, whose bardic name is "Caradawc y Fenni" ("The Caractacus of Abergavenny"). He took a great share in the formation of the well-known Welsh Literary Society, called "Cymreigyddion y Fenni," in 1833.

This Society was patronised by the French and Breton nobility, by Lord Llanover, and other county noblemen. Bevan won a prize for a Welsh essay on "The History of

Gwent under Roman Rule." He now lived in Abergavenny and spent his time in literary work. During the last thirty or forty years of his life he collected photographs of the leading scholars of the county, and he left behind him a big volume containing hundreds of photographs of distinguished men of the Principality. He died in 1882, aged sixty years.

Another name well known in the neighbourhood of Talybont is that of "Gwilym Morganwg," a bard, born at Callan Mill, near Dolygaer Lake.

MOSES EVANS.

The President of the Brecon Eisteddfod in 1826 was Lord Rodney, the son of the famous admiral. Moses Evans was an old Navy man, and in his address at the Eisteddfod he said that he had the honour of serving on board the battleship of Admiral Rodney, the father of the President. Evans, having retired on a pension, returned to Llanfrynach, his native place, to spend his last years in peace and study. He was the bard of the Brecon Welsh Society. His bardic name was Glanmehascyn, after the little stream, "Mehascyn," which flows into the Usk at Llanfrynach.

THOMAS POWELL, D.D.

This learned divine was born in Cantref, in 1608, and after taking his degree in Oxford and becoming a Fellow of the University, he was appointed Rector of this parish. During the stormy days of Cromwell he lost his living, but regained it on the accession of Charles II. He spent his time as a student, and wrote several books. One writer says of him: "He was a most clever and polite person, very advanced in learning, an able philosopher, and was well-read in several languages." He died December 31st, 1660, and was buried in St. Dunstons-in-the-West.

MANSIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

The word "Scethrog," very likely, is derived from Yscythrog, one of the descendants of Brychan, who owned this part of the land as his estate, and which he called after his own name. Scethrog comes from a Welsh word meaning rugged.

Part of the walls of the old mansion, the tower, still remains. During the early Norman times this was given to a Norman family called Pycard by Bernard Newmarch, on his conquest of Breconshire.

The present Scethrog House does not stand on the site of the first mansion, which was adorned with turrets and surrounded by a moat, and was thus a fortified residence.

Another mansion standing on the banks of the Usk, about two miles lower in the vale of that river, is Buckland. This was first built by Meredith Games, who died in the year 1600. Mr. Roderick Gwynne, Glanbran, rebuilt it in 1775, it was destroyed by fire in 1895, and rebuilt by its present owner, Mr. J. Gwynne Holford, who is a direct descendant of the last named, the house having thus remained in the possession of the same family for over a hundred and twenty years.



CRICKHOWELL CASTLE.

J. C. H. F. T. S. DEL.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HUNDRED OF CRICKHOWELL (CRUG-HYWEL).

THIS district occupies the south-eastern portion of the county, with Monmouthshire on its south and east sides. The River Usk flows across it from east to west along the beautiful Vale of Crickhowell, dividing it into two almost equal parts. The canal and two main roads (one on each side of the valley) run almost parallel with the river throughout as far as Abergavenny. The vale is flanked on the north by the mountains of Cwmdru and Llanbedr, and on the south by the lofty Llangattock limestone mountains, which reach down to Clydach Glen, and then on towards Abergavenny, finally losing themselves in the Monmouthshire highlands.

The Hundred contains some of the finest scenery in Brecknockshire, and is very wooded. Along the brow of the rugged Llangattock Mountain from Brynmawr to Llangattock runs a tramroad, over which limestone was taken to the ironworks at Clydach. There was a time when the canal and the tramway were busy scenes of much traffic, conveying supplies of coal and goods to the district.

Not only do the natural beauties of this hundred make it a famous spot in the county, but the extensive remains of an old Roman camp at Cwmdru, and those of the late ironworks at Clydach, help to connect the ancient and modern history of the district. To-day the tourist can enjoy the pleasures of a ride on the G.W.R. motor 'bus, which travels daily from

Abergavenny to Brecon, along the county road, through the fertile vale of Crickhowell, viewing about ten to twelve miles of some of the prettiest scenery in Wales.

The Rivers Rhymney, Howy, Ebbw, flow from the Hundred on the south into Monmouthshire.

This Hundred includes eight parishes : Patrishaw, Llanbedr, Crickhowell, Llangeney, Llanelly, Llangattock, Saint Michael Cwmdy, Llangynidr, and Beaufort. Besides Brynmawr, Darrenfelen, and Crickhowell, the following are among the chief villages : Llangattock, Gilwern, Llangrwyney, Llanbedr, Cwmdy, and Tretower.

THE TOWN OF BRYN-MAWR (BIG HILL).

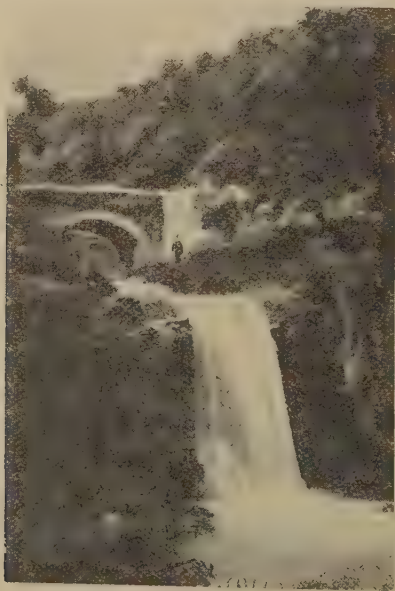
Brynmawr, the largest town in the county, with a population of about 7,000 stands on the Llangynidr Limestone Mountain, at an elevation of 1,200ft. above the sea-level—the highest town in Wales. The position of the town is bleak and exposed and, the level nature of the surrounding mountain makes it difficult to collect a good supply of water for the people, and the rainfall is about twenty-eight inches.

Most of the people are employed in the coal-mines of Monmouthshire, which are close by, and, like all mining towns, it is the centre of busy local trade. The reservoirs supplying the town with water are to the north, at about 1,450ft. above the sea-level. In spite of its high position the town is healthy to live in, the rate of mortality being in the year 1907 about 14 per 1,000. Being within easy reach of the inhabitants, the low country around Crickhowell and Abergavenny is a source of pleasure and attraction in the summer months.

When the Clydach Glen resounded with the din of iron forges, many of the Brynmawr workmen were engaged there.

The town does not appear to be very old, for in the year

1800 it was hardly large enough to be called a village; in addition to shepherds' huts, there are only two other houses at that time—the Bryn Farm and the Prince of Wales Inn. The ironworks at Beaufort, Nantyglo, and Clydach, however, made a demand for workmen, and this caused a large number



PONT HARRY ISAAC, BRYNMAWR.

of houses to be built. No roads had been made except the tramroad, now known as the Clydach Tramroad, to bring limestone from Llangattock Quarries to the works, and one leading to the furnaces at Beaufort, on its way to Dowlais. The ironworks at Clydach were busy working in 1830.

A Scotchman, named Mr. Elwood, opened out the coal industry of the town; but the greatest credit for the development of the coal and iron works in Nantyglo and neighbour-

hood is due to the ability and enterprise of Sir Joseph and Mr. Crawshay Bailey. In 1822 they made a tramroad from Brynmawr to Abergavenny to carry away the iron rails, &c., made in the works. The rocky nature of the Clydach Valley made it very difficult to construct this tramroad; huge masses of rock had to be blasted on the way.



BRYNMAWR.

The first road made was the high road between Merthyr and Abergavenny, and a coach travelled between these two places. In 1852 a line was opened by the Monmouthshire Railway & Canal Company from Newport to Nantyglo, and in 1862 the L. & N.W. Railway from Abergavenny to Merthyr was constructed.

The ancient Britons held their Courts and Councils in the neighbourhood, for we have the names Twyn-Cynghordy (Hill of Council) and Cwm Cynghordy (Dingle of Council), marking the site of these places.

The old name of Brynmawr was Wain Helygen (The Marsh of the Willow), derived from a piece of land known as the Marshes.

The improvements for the comfort of the people were very slow in coming, and very little was done to raise the condition of the place for many years. The system of obtaining food, &c., for the people was known as the "truck system"—a company shop being opened and the wages kept in the office in payment for the goods. Coal was conveyed to the houses on the backs of mules.

The "pay" was made at the end of six or eight weeks, although some portion of the wages had been paid every fortnight. When the "pay" came round the amount of money required was rather large, and horses were seen drawing trams containing money from the Dowlais bank to Nantyglo.

In those days few voters resided in the district, and they had to travel to Brecon to record their votes at an election, which then lasted fifteen days. How different things are in our days! There are now over 1,500 houses in the town, and about as many voters.

Brynmawr and Beaufort are now almost one town, the road connecting them being lined with houses nearly all the way.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CLYDACH VALLEY.

This valley extends for about six miles from Brynmawr in an easterly direction, and widens out into the Vale of Usk, and presents one of the most natural and picturesque spots of the county. To get a similar district, we must go to the extreme west of Breconshire, where the River Mellte pursues its course through the limestone caves and grottos of Ystradfellte. The limestone strata in both places come to

the surface, and hence we see the grottos, caves, and falls so truly grand, which beautify the valley.

There is in the Clydach Valley a series of fairy glens and wooded nooks, which almost baffle description. The descent from the top is several hundred feet in the distance of two miles, and the repeated waterfalls—some of them perpendicular—into the pools below well repay the effort and danger of climbing up and down the steep and slippery sides of the rocks. The thick underwood, with the basin-like rocks receiving the



CLYDACH VALLEY, NEAR GILWERN.

waters, makes a picture not often surpassed in beauty and charm. It is doubtful whether the sight is finer in winter, with the snow and dash of water among the icicles, than when the foliage and moss of summer enrich the scene.

It is no wonder if Shakespeare visited this spot, as is generally believed, that he imagined this the abode of his mysterious person "Puck," for, in truth, the "fairies" could find no more charming haunts than some of the nooks along the banks of this little stream of Clydach.

The "Pistyll Mawr" ("The Great Spout") and "Pwll-y-Cwn" ("The Dogs' Pool") are both favourite sights with the tourist. "Pwll-y-Cwn" is about two miles above the aqueduct over the Clydach, and is so-called, it is said, from the discovery by dogs of the body of a woman murdered by her husband.

Not far from the fall of the Clydach into the Usk, and at the bottom of the Cwm of that name, the Brecknock Canal is carried over the dingle. An immense embankment of earth has been made, along which the canal passes. The aqueduct was completed in 1799, and is eighty-four feet in height from the level of the river; the arch is ninety yards in length and twenty-two feet in span.



CANAL AND RECTORY, NEAR GILWERN.

The well-known Black Rock—the slopes of the mountain along which the road from Brynmawr passes—supplies limestone for the use of the district. Cyclists and motorists have often come to grief on this dangerous road; the descent is so sudden in some parts that vehicular traffic is very difficult.

In this valley stand several small villages : Clydach, Gilwern, Llanelly, and on the mountain above, Darrenfelen.

GILWERN.

This is a favourite summer spot visited by pleasure parties and tourists. The village is rather unique in its situation and surroundings. It stands on the slopes of the hill along which runs the L. & N.W.Ry. to Abergavenny, and the main road from Brynmawr passes through, to the town below. The canal, crossing the valley on its way to Brecon, adds much interest and pleasure to visitors, for a trip in one of the pleasure-boats to Llangattock, four miles away, is delightful. The thick foliage along the banks, broken occasionally by the opening glades on the way, combines with the birds and flowers, to make a scene which is truly charming.

THE CLYDACH IRONWORKS.

The ruins of the dismantled ironworks of Clydach point to a time in the history of this pretty valley when the place flashed with the glow of furnaces and resounded with the din of wheels and machinery. Now all is silent. These were first built about two hundred years ago, by John Hanbury, a son of Capel Hanbury, of Pontypool but we find in 1830 that they were owned by Messrs. Frere & Co.

At that time, there were three blast furnaces for smelting the ore and two forges for converting the pig-iron into bars. Weekly, there were about a hundred tons made, each ton consuming in the process, about three and a half tons of coal, in addition to the quantity of lime needed. Over four hundred people were employed.

The iron-ore was obtained at a distance of two miles from the works, upon part of the mountain called Llamarch,

the property of the Duke of Beaufort. The raw materials were brought down a steep incline and an iron railroad. The manufactured iron was taken for sale to Newport, twenty miles away, in carts or on horseback, over very rough, bad roads, and across the hills.

After the canal was completed, barges carried it. The machinery was driven by water-power. During the last few years of their time, the works employed over one thousand men. In the year 1831, ten thousand tons of pig-iron and six thousand tons of bar iron were made, requiring fifty thousand tons of coal and the necessary amount of lime in the process. The lime was obtained from the mountains close by.

The coal was brought down by a railroad from the Llwyny-Pwll Colliery, about four miles away.

Llanelly Church, standing on the breast of the hill, facing the Usk Valley, commands a fine view of beautiful country.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CRICKHOWELL.

Crug-Hywel (Hywel's Cairn).

This pretty town stands on a rising ground on the left bank of the Usk, about fourteen miles south-east from Brecon. It has a population of 1,150, and is three hundred feet above the sea-level. The Crug, and rampart of loose stones, covering a space of 1,160ft in circumference, are seen on the Table Mountain, a bold hill overlooking the town on the north. They are the ruins of a very strong fortress of the ancient Britons. The only entrance was from the north, by the Cefn-ffordd—ridge-way.



CRICKHOWELL.

This range (a part of the Black Mountains) is called the Breannog Mountains, and shelters the vale from the north winds; while the bold and rugged Darren overlooks the village of Llangattock, which lies just opposite Crickhowell on the other side of the river.

To the west of the town is the verdant Myarth, an eminence situated in the beautiful Glanus Park. A weekly market is held in Crickhowell, when the people from the "hills" come down and carry away the farm produce of the vale. Entering the town along the turnpike road from Brecon, we notice an open space, adorned by a drinking fountain, the gift of the late Sir Joseph Bailey, Lord Glanus. The town may be said to consist of one street, reaching down to the bridge over the Usk.

The Town Hall was built at the expense of the Duke of Beaufort. The ground floor is used as a market-place, while the first floor serves for the business of the Police and County Courts.

At one time the town was well known for its flannel manufacture; but besides a few factories in the neighbourhood, there is nothing remaining.

Before the Union of England and Wales, in 1535, Crickhowell was distinct from the county of Brecknock. It was under the rule of the "Lords Marchers"—its governor being the Lord of Blaenllyfni Castle. In the reign of Henry VIII., however, it became a part of the county, and was made the head of the Crickhowell Hundred.

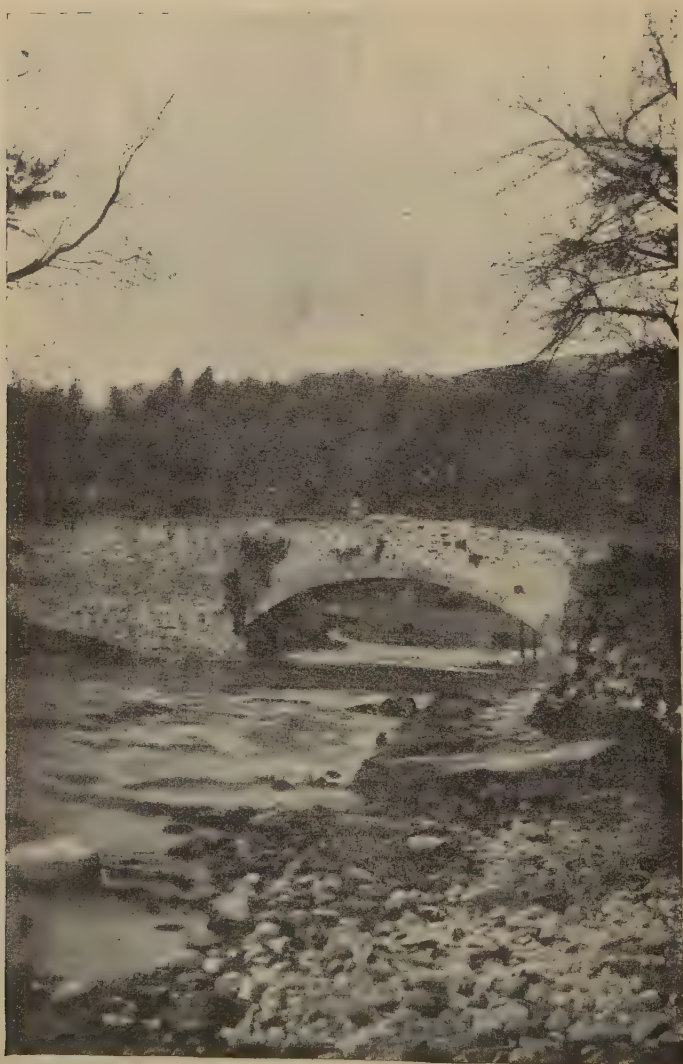
Under King William II. the Manor of Crickhowell was given to Sir Humphrey de Burghill, and afterwards passed into the hands of the Tubervilles. The King himself held the Manor of Blaenllyfni and Dinas.

THE CASTLE.

Crickhowell Castle is one of the thirteen Norman Castles erected in the county. It stands on the south-eastern side of the town, on the left of the road leading from Abergavenny. The present ruins are only a small portion of the old castle, which occupied a space of eight acres. The castle tump commands a fine view of the landscape, and is the site of the keep, a lofty square building, four storeys high, whose vaults, no doubt, are beneath the present ruins. Houses are now built on this old site of the castle. Ivy Tower, a house standing in Standard Street, indicate the surroundings of the old fortress.

In 1172 the castle was stormed and its garrison made prisoners by a Monmouthshire chieftain, but, after some years, it was regained for the king. During the reign of Edward I., Sir Hugh de Tuberville was in charge of it, and he raised troops in Wales for the king's service. Other Norman Nobles, in turn, commanded it, among whom was Sir Grimbald de Pauncefote, who obtained permission from Henry III. to hold a weekly market and an annual fair, May 12, in the town.

Henry IV., in 1403, gave orders to Sir John, son of Sir Grimbald, to fortify and defend his castle against the attacks of Owen Glyndwr, who, however, succeeded in destroying not only Crickhowell Castle, but many others in the county. The Manor of Crickhowell was under the rule of the Lord of Blaenllyfni and Dinas, near Llangorse, but Edward IV granted the manors of Crickhowell and Tretower to his friend and favourite Sir William Herbert, of Raglan Castle, knight, whom he afterwards created Earl of Pembroke. His daughter, Lady Elizabeth Herbert, conveyed these estates by marriage to Sir Charles Somerset, from whom they have descended to their present owner, the Duke of Beaufort.



PONT-YR-ESGOB, NEAR PATRISHOW CHURCH.

PORTH MAWR.

On the side of the road entering the town from Brecon stands this old mansion, surrounded by a high moss-covered wall, with turrets along the top. The old gateway "Porth Mawr," or the "Great Gate," is a fine Gothic entrance, and the view of the vale through this is one of unusual beauty. The mansion was erected in the reign of Henry VII., by a member of the Herbert family, and was called Cwrt-y-Carw ("The Stag's Court"). The old house, it is said, was defended against Cromwell's troops in the time of the Civil war; it has, however, long been demolished.

The old Roman Road, Via Julia, passed through the Vale of Crickhowell, on to the Cwmdru fortress, then on to Brecon, and from there to Carmarthen.

CHURCH OF ISHOW THE MARTYR, NEAR CRICKHOWELL.

The above church is in the Parish of Patrishow, on the southern slopes of the Black Mountains, and is about six miles from Abergavenny, or Crickhowell. A pretty walk to the church from Abergavenny is by the Brecon road to Llangrwyne village, thence by the highway through the village of Llangenny towards Llanbedr, until the high road from Crickhowell is reached, and then continuing along that road.

The church, with its churchyard, is placed on a small piece of ground formed out of the hillside, on the east slope of that part of the Black Mountain Range called Patrishow Hill, at a height of about 1,000ft. above sea-level. This range is true "grouse country," with delightful dingles and sparkling streams.

The present building is said to date from the fifteenth century, having been re-built upon the foundations of an earlier church.

The inside of the church is full of interesting features of church architecture. At the west end, annexed to the church, is a chapel eighteen feet by ten feet, generally regarded as being of an earlier date than the church. The Norman font was known to be in the church dedicated to St. Ishow in 1060.

A curious cross and other stones in the churchyard point to an early date.

Among the epitaphs on some of the tombstones the following are interesting :—

“ Go home, dear friends, and shed a tear,
I must lie here till Christ appear;
And when He comes I hope to have
A joyfulle rising from the grave.”

Another :—

“ In a bed of clay I rest with joy,
From care and labour free;
When Christ doth call, arise I shall,
And death no more shall see.”

This beautiful and remarkable little mountain shrine, which is a living monument of British Christianity, has been restored, and thus one of the most interesting historical structures in the county will be preserved.

In the dingle below the church is the well called “ Ffynon Ishow.”

Remarkable properties were ascribed to its waters, and a tradition still survives in the neighbourhood that early in the eleventh century a gentleman and his lady came over from the Continent to this well. They were suffering from leprosy and they came to try the water. It is said that the “ cure ” was so sudden and complete as to induce the gentleman to leave behind him a “ hatful ” of gold as a thankoffering. This money was to be used for building a church there, dedicated to the saint to whom the well was sacred.

CHAPTER XXX.

CWMDU.

This pretty village lies in the Vale of Rhiangoll—a stream flowing into the Usk on the left bank, about two miles from Crickhowell. The name Cwm-du, Cwm-dingle; du—black, “Black Dingle,” is hardly a suitable one for this pretty rural district. Its name is doubtless connected with the Black Mountains in the neighbourhood. Tretower is another small village at the mouth of the vale, just on the Brecon main road, and resting in the shadow of some large trees.

The full name of this parish is Llanfihangel (or St. Michael) Cwmdy; one of the largest and most fertile in the Hundred of Crickhowell. On the same side of the Usk near Tretower, and facing the entrance into the Vale of Cwmdy, stands the hill of Myarth, one of the most charming spots in the Vale of Crickhowell.

This parish is full of interesting remains, and can boast of having been the abode of some very famous men. The Castle of Tretower, the Roman camp at Cwmdy, the British camp on the little hill of Myarth, and the names of Sir Roger Vaughan and his descendants, together with the Rev. Thomas Price, one of the greatest men of the Church in the county, all these combine to make this spot a truly historic place in the history of Breconshire. Cwmdy Church also appears to date from the eleventh century, and is, therefore, connected with the earliest history of the district. The square embattled tower is, however, supposed to be the only relic of the first building.

THE ROMAN CAMP.

The Via Julia—a Roman road—passed through this parish on its way to Brecon from Gobannium (Abergavenny), and there are clear signs to show that one of the most important Roman stations stood at a small place, Pentre Gaer, near the village of Cwmdy. Pentre—town, and “gaer”—a fort or hill: the town on the hill.

In ancient times there was here a village of some size, Foundations of buildings, old bricks, cement, and pottery have been dug up, showing that considerable buildings, now no longer seen, covered the place at one time. The few cottages now standing are the remains of what was once an old town of the monks. It was the custom of the monks to erect a number of dwellings as homes for some of their order to guard their lands around, while the other tenants were employed in working on the land.

The camp itself is on a plot of rising ground, and is of oblong shape. It was about 80 yards long by about 60 yards wide, and the whole was surrounded by earthen ramparts. A part of the building was no doubt the residence of a Roman officer, perhaps one of the generals. Smaller camps are connected with it nearer the Brecon road. Coins of Roman times have been found here, and, in digging in the field just around the camp, an underground vault was found, about 6ft. long, 3ft. wide, and 3ft. deep, filled with human bones.

On the hill above the Parish Church, and called Penthir, are the remains of another important military station. In size it is 140 yards in length, 105 yards in breadth, and is fortified by high ramparts and defended on its lower side by a ditch. The wood below bears the name of “Coed-y-Gaer” (The Wood of the Fort).



The Roman road, no doubt, passed on through here to Bwlch, thence by Scethrog to Brecon.

TRETOWER CASTLE.

We cannot tell for certain who first built this old castle. It may have been the mansion of one of the Welsh Rulers of the county, and, if so, it dates back to a very early time, even before the Romans put down a stone on their roads, or raised the camp of Cwmdu close by.

But it is evident that the Normans had a hand in either rebuilding the old mansion or in erecting a new castle on its ruins. A Norman knight named Pycard no doubt built here a castle when he occupied the lands around under Newmarch, the Norman conqueror, about 1090.

The only remains now however of that ancient castle are a round tower, and some ruined walls covered with ivy, an ideal home for owls and birds. It stands on a low and damp spot, with the River Rhiangoll babbling past it.

Adjoining the castle grounds is a farmhouse, once the home of a noted family, the Vaughans, whose descendants remained for centuries eminent in different ways. Many of these Vaughans were Members of Parliament; Sir Roger Vaughan saved the king's life on the field of Agincourt, at the expense of losing his own. For his brave deed he was knighted on the field of battle just before his death. Thomas Vaughan was executed by Henry VI. for having taken up the cause of the Yorkists. Another Sir Roger Vaughan, lost his life in the Battle of Danesmoor, near Banbury, where he fought as a Yorkist; Sir Thomas Vaughan was beheaded at Pontefract by Richard III. Henry Vaughan, *Silurist*, was a member of this family.

Tretower Court was no doubt the residence of the Lord

of the Tower; it was the mansion of a famous nobleman, for it contained State apartments, and over its entrance was a tower. Between the court and the castle was a *keep*, where the prisoners were lodged.

Tretower Church was rebuilt by Sir J. R. Bailey, Bart., M.P., in 1877.

CHAPTER XXXI.

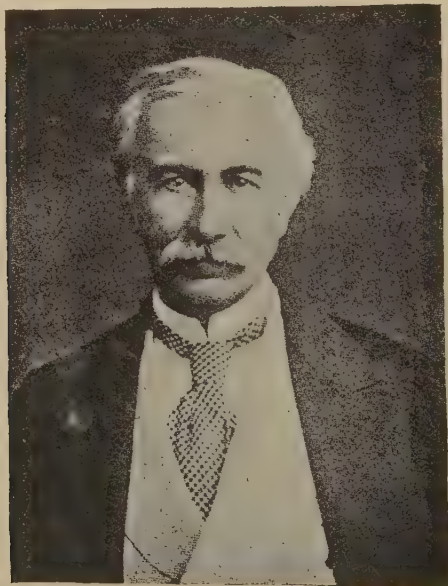
EMINENT MEN OF THE HUNDRED OF CRICKHOWELL.

This district can be proud of the names connected with it, among whom may be mentioned Sir Henry Edward Bartle Frere, Rev. L. Probert, D.D., Principal, Theological College, Bangor, and Sir Thomas Phillips.

SIR BARTLE FRERE.

The house where this famous Welshman was born in 1815, is still to be seen in Clydach, and is easily known by the large number of windows it contains. He was the fifth son of Edward Frere, and Mary Ann, his wife, who made their home in this district, having bought the ironworks in the place. They were of a talented stock, hailing from Norfolk, the Right Hon. John Hookham Frere, M.P., and Edward Frere, being brothers. Henry also showed signs of great natural gifts, and so, when a boy, he was sent to King Edward's Grammar School, Bath, for his early training. While here, his success was very marked—he carried off the school prizes every term. He was next sent to Haileybury College, where his success was still greater, and his reputation now gained for him a Government position in India, which he accepted in 1834. He rose rapidly in that country, and, in 1859, we find him as a member of the Council of the Governor-General of Calcutta.

For four years he was Governor of Bombay. So eminent were his services during the Indian Mutiny, that the English Parliament twice thanked him. He was sent out to Zanzibar, in Africa, on a special mission to assist this country in putting down the horrors of the slave trade in those parts.



SIR BARTLE FRERE.

Among the eminent positions he occupied, are President of the Royal Geographical Society and Vice-President of the Society for Spreading the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Oxford and Cambridge honoured him with the title Doctor of Laws.

In 1844 he married Miss Arthur, the daughter of the Governor of Bombay. Lord Beaconsfield, then Prime Minis-

ter of England, said in the House of Lords that Sir Bartle Frere was sent out to South Africa to carry out a scheme for the closer union of the different states in that country. This was his last public work, after which he returned to this country, and retired into private life, at Wimbledon.

On the 29th May, 1884, after a short illness, this gallant soldier died in the 70th year of his age, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral with great honours. His grave is under the dome, and adjoining the grave of Captain John Cook. This county takes pride in the memory of an eminent man who was a most trusted servant of the Crown. Sir Bartle Frere will also be remembered in South Africa; for a scholarship bearing his name still exists in the Cape of Good Hope University.

THE REV. THOMAS PRICE, OF CWMDU.

(CARNHUANAWC.)

“Whole troops of heroes Wales has yet to boast
And sends thee one; a sample of her best.”

The bardic title of this clergyman, “Carnhuanawc,” is a Welsh compound word: “Carn,” a cairn, or mound; huan,” the sun; “awc,” an ending denoting “full of.” The general meaning of the whole word is “The Man of the Sunny Mound.”

Thomas Price was the younger of two brothers, and was born Oct. 2, 1787, in a lonely farmhouse, with high gables and thatched roof, at Pencaer Helen, near Builth, in the Parish of Llanafan Fawr. A very fine oak tree stands near with marks of fire on its branches—a fire which had burnt down the house in the time of Thomas's grandfather. His father was the Rev.

Thomas Price, a clergyman, who, at one time, had charge of several parishes. His total income, however, amounted only to £50 a year.

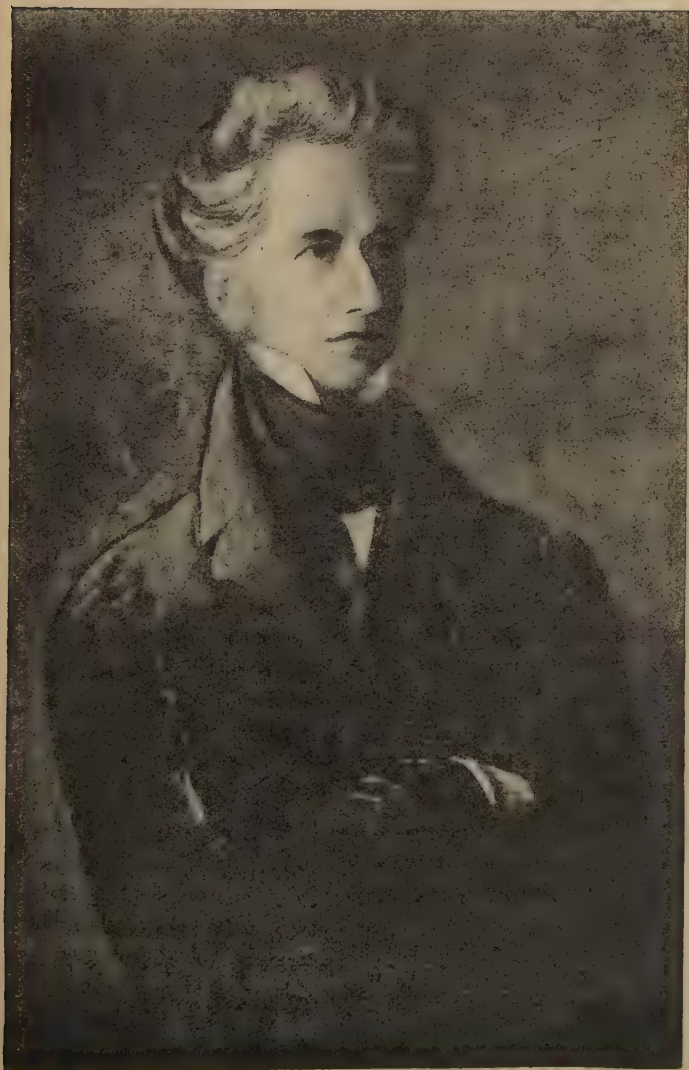
Thomas and his brother were sent to the dame's school of the village, where he soon learned to read English and Welsh. "I have always spoken Welsh from my infancy," he says. "I suppose that the Welsh has been spoken by my ancestors as their native tongue from the days of Babel. My father spoke it, and my mother and my grandfather," &c.

"On a winter's night I sat in the circle around the fire under the big open chimney, and listened to the songs and stories of the country folk, or to the poetry of Dafydd ab Gwilym read by the firelight; but if a harper should chance to visit us, happy was the day, yea, I might say, earthly speaking, blessed was the time."

His mother Mary came of a respectable family, Bowen by name, and was a woman of great piety and much natural ability. Thomas, as a lad, was wonderfully clever and odd in his ways, and soon passed from the dame's school to a higher one kept by a Mr. James Jones, in the same village. Thomas, however, quickly exhausted the simple stock of his second school, and the two boys were advanced to the Vicarage House of Llanafan Fawr, to be taught by the Rev. Henry Beynon, the Vicar.

The boys would start out in the morning, taking their dinner-lunch in a satchel, and returning home every night. Thomas was very fond of reading and eagerly studied such hard subjects as geometry, astronomy, mechanics; while drawing had some great charm for him.

His comrades would heartily laugh in their boyish games, but Thomas would join only in some game requiring skill and care. It seems that he very seldom would lose his temper in the temptations and troubles of boys' play.



CARNHUANAWC.

His favourite recreation was a walk alone to some hillside, or along the river-bank, so that he might enjoy the beauties of nature around him—in the birds, trees, and flowers.

A thoughtful boy like himself was never idle. On a wet day, when out-door pleasures were impossible, Thomas would be found in a cottage handling the carpenter's tools, for he had made up for himself a little workshop in the village. So clever was he with his handiwork, that after watching a carpenter or a blacksmith at some job, he would imitate them, and was often seen making toy lyres or harps.

He was so gentle in his manners, and so mild in temper, and so proverbially kind to all his friends, that they not only respected him, but were very fond of him. One day, while they were going to their satchels for their dinner, the boys noticed that Thomas had nothing to eat. "Tom, what have you done with your bread and cheese?" said one. He replied: "Dear brother, you do not know what it is to want food."

Tom had given his dinner to a poor, hungry old man he met on the road.

Thus all his comrades admired him, in spite of his reserved nature. The glorious skies, mountain scenery, the foliage and flowers, had a charm for him. The flitting butterfly, the sound of the wind, the rippling of the little brook, and the singing birds, seemed to have taught him to love the whole of nature—indeed, it whispered to him some of its secrets. Such feelings were unknown to his play-fellows, and he was to them a puzzle.

The ruins of an old castle, the cromlechs, and other remains made him curious to know the story they could tell.

Thomas attended Christ College, Brecon for seven years, 1805-12, and lodged in the town. During these years,

he was in the habit of visiting the house of Mr. Theophilus Jones, who was working at his history of the county, and there he met some French naval officers, who were prisoners of war. Napoleon had been defeated by the English, and several of his officers were now prisoners in Brecon.

These were very much taken up by the gentle manners and talent of young Thomas, and invited him often to spend the evenings with them. He thus quickly learnt to speak French fluently, and also acquired much information on the habits and history of the Continent. Mr. Theophilus Jones, too, was glad to get the assistance of Thomas Price, who was clever in engraving and drawing. Most of the plates for Mr. Jones' book were done by him.

Still, Thomas did not neglect his studies, nor other duties connected with the work of a clergyman; for he was in the habit of visiting the poor, to read, converse, and pray with them.

Music and musical instruments also had a share of his valuable time. He was exceedingly fond of the harp, and made several with his own hands. Welsh music was a favourite study with him all through life. So clever had he become in designing the construction of a harp that in the year 1843, Mr. Bassett Jones, Cardiff, the famous Welsh harper, wrote to him asking his advice and help in making a perfect triple harp, to be presented to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

And, on July 27, 1843, Mr. Price, Mr. Basset Jones, and the two eminent Welsh harpists, John Jones of Llanover, and Thomas Griffith of Tredegar, appeared in Buckingham Palace to present the new harp. This pleasant duty was performed by Mr. Price in his usual graceful manner. The company had a very good time at the

Palace, and after a royal banquet and some music on the Welsh harp, they returned home in great delight, having impressed the royal household as very worthy sons of Gwalia Gwlad y Gân " ("Wales the Land of Song").

Having served for some years as a curate near Builth, he removed to Crickhowell, in 1813, to take the charge of Llangenny, Llanbedr, and Patrishow Churches. His work now was very heavy, and his life henceforth was spent in helping good movements, and in writing on subjects relating to the language and people of his dear country—Wales.

The British and Foreign Bible Society found in him a true friend, as his belief in the Bible as the only book with a message to all the nations of the earth was profound. When a branch of the Society was formed at Brecon, Thomas Price was one of the first members.

His fame as a preacher had now been established, and in the year 1815 he was Chaplain to the High Sheriff, and in April of that year he preached before Judge Hardinge at Brecon.

Llangattock and Llanelly were added to his charge in 1815. He was still curate, and lodged with Mr. James Pritchard, at five shillings a week, and had to find his own coal and candle. This family never left him—for when he removed to Cwmdy, the Pritchards went with him to the Vicarage.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Rev. T. Price gave himself entirely to the work of his noble calling, and endeared himself to all. He was the idol of his people. They were always delighted with his visits. Usually he left home soon after breakfast, and often walked twenty miles a day before he returned home at night. He did not believe in wearing an overcoat, nor in riding. Sometimes, after a hard day's walking, he would retire weary to rest himself in a favourite cavern, where, enchanted by the summer's fragrant odours and soothing murmurs, he would lie for hours, and even all night long in blissful thoughts as in a dream. It was a great pleasure to him to act as guide to friends along the mountains, valleys, and caves, and happy was the time for those lucky enough to be led by him.

Not only was his conversation delightful owing to his wide reading, but he could direct the youths of his district in outdoor games and sports, and proved himself an expert in the use of the bow and arrow and the oar. He was endowed with a strong physical frame, and could endure a really long journey without much fatigue.

To rich and poor alike his visits were always welcome, but more especially in times of anxious care and sorrow. Then his gentle and kind spirit endeared him to the sufferer.

Mr. Price had a deep affection for his mother, who, after his father's death, continued to reside at Builth. Her sister, too, Mrs. Elinor Morgan, was of much comfort to her in those lonely years. He would often visit his mother, walking the whole distance of thirty miles, from Crickhowell to Builth, staying a few days, and again returning on foot. On these

journeys, he would be so charmed by the sights and sounds of nature that, forgetting himself for the time, he would lie down among the heath and moss, lost in a kind of silent dream for hours, and aroused only by the chilly breeze of night or by the tread of some mountain shepherd. His wish was :

“ Oh that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment.”

Lady Hester Stanhope, a niece of William Pitt, the great statesman, was spending much time in Builth, and her Ladyship became very friendly with the Price family. Whenever Thomas returned home from school in Brecon, he was invited to join the party with her in travelling through different parts of Wales. His wide knowledge and gifted conversation greatly delighted her.

In the year 1825 he was promoted to the living of Cwmdru, where he remained as vicar of the parish until his death. The family of Pritchard removed there with him, and proved to him very true friends to the last.

By this time, he had become known throughout Wales and England as a very able writer on Welsh literature, and was soon to be recognised as an authority on the history of bardism, eisteddfodau, and antiquities. His days were now crowded with hard work—even the seven days of the week. Not many men gave themselves so fully to toiling for his Church and his nation as Thomas Price. He travelled on the Continent, and met there some of the leading scholars of the day. Ireland and Scotland were also visited by him, and wherever he went, his time was fully occupied in exploring old ruins and their history.

When the Welsh Literary Society of Abergavenny—Cym-

reigyddion y Fenni—was formed on November 22, in 1823, Thomas Price was made secretary. And it is with pleasure we find that, in Easter week, 1909, a pilgrimage was made to his tomb by the friends from the Abergavenny Eisteddfod. Lady Llanover, one of the founders of this Society, was a worthy patroness of Thomas Price.

The speeches of Carnhuanawc at the eisteddfodau held at Brecon, Carmarthen, Welshpool, and Denbigh, were looked upon as some of the best treats of the whole meetings. He was consulted by bards, patrons, and literary men from all parts, and no great meeting of Welsh patriots was considered complete without Carnhuanawc. He taught the people to respect their Welsh language, and proved that it was full of valued treasures by explaining the old books and giving their history.

For six years, 1836-1842, he undertook the chief work of his life—"Hanes Cymru" ("History of Wales"). This was printed in fourteen parts, reaching to 798 pages, by Mr. Thomas Williams, of Crickhowell. In order to satisfy himself on the facts of his history, he would take long journeys, at much expense and time. It was not uncommon for him to go to London, or even to Paris, to find out some point of information, on which he was doubtful. The book covers the history of Wales from the earliest times to the 15th century, and it is considered one of the most valuable books in the Welsh language.

Amongst his other works are :—

An Essay on "The Comparative Merits of the Remains of Ancient Literature in the Welsh, Irish, and Gaelic Languages."

An Essay on "The Geographical Progress of Empire and Civilization."

An essay on "The Statutes of Rhuddlan."

An Essay on "The Physiognomy and Physiology of the Present Inhabitants of Britain."

The Bretons also, in their efforts to secure a translation of the Scriptures into their own language, found a true friend and valuable helper in Thomas Price.

Those who had the pleasure of listening to some of his addresses at the eisteddfodau, describe him as one of the most fluent and eloquent speakers they ever heard. In Brecon, on one occasion, while speaking of the value of some old Welsh books, he had fairly electrified his audience, so that when he concluded, they were standing on their feet in praise and admiration of the charming speaker.

His daily life was simple and kind ; his diet plain ; one thing was rather unusual, for his breakfast, he daily had fresh hot rolls. He was also very fond of good cheese, and drank home-made small beer.

He had two pets—a ferret, "Bobby," and an owl, named "Gweny," which he took from some boys who were getting up a fight between a cat and the owl. Price trained the owl to be tame about the house, and she would fly to him at his call. But one winter's night *Gweny* suddenly felt a desire for her freedom and flew out of the house, and would not return at her master's call. The next morning she was found dead under a yew tree in the churchyard. He had kept and petted her for three years.

His library had over one thousand five hundred books. His favourite desk was made by his own hands, and was so arranged, that he could raise or lower the top to suit his convenience, and his pens were made from the reeds of Llyn-safaddan. He carved skilfully in wood and stone ; he

modelled in cork, wax and clay; engraved neatly upon brass, silver and steel; and drew in pencil with great correctness.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The changing fashions of dress had for him no charm—from his youth until his death, he wore the same sort of dress. The old women of the parish spun into yarn the wool from the sheep of the mountain sides, and the village weaver made it for him into cloth. Every article was home grown, home-spun, and home-made. His hats were made from the skin of mountain hares. The buckles on his shoes were made by the village blacksmith. He wore his black trousers unusually wide, a rather short black waistcoat, and a very long black frock-coat, with long and wide sleeves, loose at the wrist and set into the arm-hole with plaits upon the shoulder.

The buttons on his coat were black, and of a peculiar sort. His large shirt collar stuck into his chin, and stood level with the tops of his ears, and was surrounded with a black loose tie of many folds. His thick and well-set hair, and his fine hands, were delicately kept; his whole appearance suggested a man of refinement and ability.

In October, 1848, a triennial eisteddfod was held at Abergavenny, and here Thomas Price's public work closed—his last service to his countrymen was as Chairman of the evening meeting on the second day of the eisteddfod. The deadly whiteness of his complexion, and the great brightness of his eyes caused some of his friends to fear, that he would expire on the platform. His body seemed really dead, even while he was speaking, and he returned home to Cwmdy never again to walk out.

Lady Hall of Llanover had sent her carriage to bring him there, in order to give him, as she thought, a better chance of recovering his health. As soon as the friends arrived, in spite of great weakness, he brought to them his favourite triple harp, and explained its action, and gave them some music. They, however, had to return without him. He had hoped in a few days to go down to see Sir Benjamin, who was very ill. His guests left about four o'clock in the afternoon, and he went out to see them off in the carriage.

Mrs. Pritchard was from home for the day, and her daughter Elinor prepared tea for Mr. Price, and while waiting for him to ring the bell as usual after he finished his meal, she sat down to her harp and played some of his favourite Welsh airs. As he did not ring, she entered the room, and, to her surprise, found him leaning over the right arm of his chair, with his head drooping as if he were asleep. He never spoke a word, and breathed his last in peace about eight o'clock the same evening.

The funeral was a very impressive one, and around his grave the whole multitude knelt on the turf—even the little children went down on their knees—and tears rained down. Many sobbed as if with broken hearts. That day was a witness to the great affection, which the people cherished for him. “The memory of the righteous is blessed.”

“At Church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place.”

These lines truly describe this country parson, for he was in the best sense of the term, “a godly man.” His unaffected manners were the easy and graceful indications of a noble and gentle nature, and these, together with his natural

gifts, made him fit for the presence of a royal person or for the sick bed of a peasant. At school, college, and among his friends in his riper years, in every society, and at the homely fireside, the first quality that endeared him to all was that of kindness. His character was an open book of truth, justice, and benevolence.

Carnhuanawc's person was striking even in a crowd of people. His fine face, clear complexion, his large, dark brown eyes, his tall, slender figure, upright and elastic, his graceful bearing, with his profusion of waving hair adorning his noble head, easily marked him out as a very elegant man.

His countenance indicated a soul full of noble and pure thoughts, adorned with that peace—deep as the sea and calm as the clear blue sky.

He was in every sense a worthy son of the county, and among the long array of eminent natives, no one deserves to be more honoured in the hearts of every true Welshman to-day than Thomas Price. He was born and bred, lived and died in his native county. For his beautiful life, great talents, and his passion for the Welsh language and the Welsh nation, he is loved and honoured by Welsh bards and patriots all over the civilized world.

At his death the sorrow of the Welsh people found expression in the pulpits, on the platforms, and in the newspapers of the day. English papers and standard magazines added their tribute to the memory of a ripe scholar and his noble life. Among the foreign scholars who admired him was Dr. Carl Meyer, who wrote: "Good Price dead! I had most ardently wished once more to see him before his death, or mine; and to show him how much my idea of his merit had grown during that time. Indeed, the remembrance of him

is like true gold, and becomes more precious through the fire of absence."

"He was also a true Welshman, the most amiable and interesting I ever met with, possessing in the highest degree that wonderful combination so peculiar to the Welsh character. He was a poet without knowing it, and the silent genius at the bottom of his soul was more powerful still than the brilliant one he showed in his conversation. I shall long be mourning for him, and never cease to love and to admire him either in this world or in any other to come."

The high folk in the neighbourhood had a most sincere and affectionate regard for him. The poor of the parish almost worshipped him. He never feared the favours of anyone when he believed it his duty to speak the truths of the gospel he loved so well. His end was touching and peaceful, for he breathed his last almost to the sound of the harp so dear to his soul.

His wide knowledge and charming personality fitted him for the most learned and refined men in Europe. His simple habits of life, his admiration of every flower, and every tree of native growth in Wales, his deep interest in the Cambrian peasantry, and in the language of his country, its music and poetry, gave him so much pleasure that he was the happiest, because the most contented of human beings. He envied no one, he coveted nothing, expected nothing, but assisted all, as far as his money, his time, or his talents could avail, to promote the best interests of Wales and Welshmen. He neither bent the knee, nor bowed the head to advance his own interests. He was born to little, lived upon little, grasped at no more than he possessed.

In several parts of the Principality, in Manchester, and in Liverpool, funeral sermons were preached for him in chapels

and churches. The bards of Wales mourned long after him, and Islwyn has written of him some of the most poetic and patriotic lines ever penned after any of Cambria's heroes.

"Carnhuanawc enwer—digon yw
I greu trwy Gymru deimlad byw."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LORD GLANUSK.

Some one hundred and thirty years ago, Richard Crawshay, a Yorkshire man, came to South Wales, and founded the Cyfarthfa Works. This "Iron King," as he was called, had an "iron will" clearly shown in his face. At the age of sixteen years, Richard had quarrelled with his father on the



GLANUSK.

farm, and he saddled his pony and started off to try his fortune in London.

The story of his career, how he sold his pony for £15, and hired himself to a man having a "cast-iron business," where

he was put to sell flat-irons to washerwomen—and many other interesting incidents—all these make up a striking account of the great “Iron King.”

His huge brain power, undaunted enterprise, and forceful character, will easily explain, how it was possible for him to make a fortune almost beyond the dreams of anyone.

When Mr. Crawshay had settled in South Wales, and was doing well at the Cyfarthfa Iron Works, he sent for three of his nephews, and started them in life. One of these became Sir Joseph Bailey—grandfather of the subject of this memoir.

We have given this introduction to the account of Lord Glanusk's career, in order to indicate the unusual fame, his ancestors had acquired in the industrial world. This will also help us to estimate the worth of the nobleman of whom we are speaking.

“I slept and dreamed that life was Beauty,
I woke and found that life was Duty.”

Joseph Russell Bailey (afterwards Lord Glanusk) was born in Leamington, on April 7th, 1840, and his early days were spent at Penymarth, near Crickhowell. He was educated at Harrow and Oxford, and closed his University career by a Continental tour. He married Mary Anne, daughter of Henry Lucas, M.D., of Glanyrafon, Crickhowell. The stately mansion of Glanusk was their home, in fact, as well as in name.

Sir Joseph was born “with a silver spoon in his mouth,” as the old saying is; and had he chosen it, a life of enjoyment and ease lay before him, for he inherited great wealth and succeeded to the title of Baronet on his grandfather's death. But the Crawshays and Baileys, were not men to choose ease before work.

This second Sir Joseph, like his famous forefathers, was endowed with a commercial aptitude, immense business ability, a strong and ready brain, a steady purpose, and tireless energy. In short, he was a very clever man.

From both father and mother he inherited strong qualities and noble virtues. Indeed, the sterling character of the son, owed much to the early training of the parents.

In his case

That best portion of a good man's life,
His little nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love,

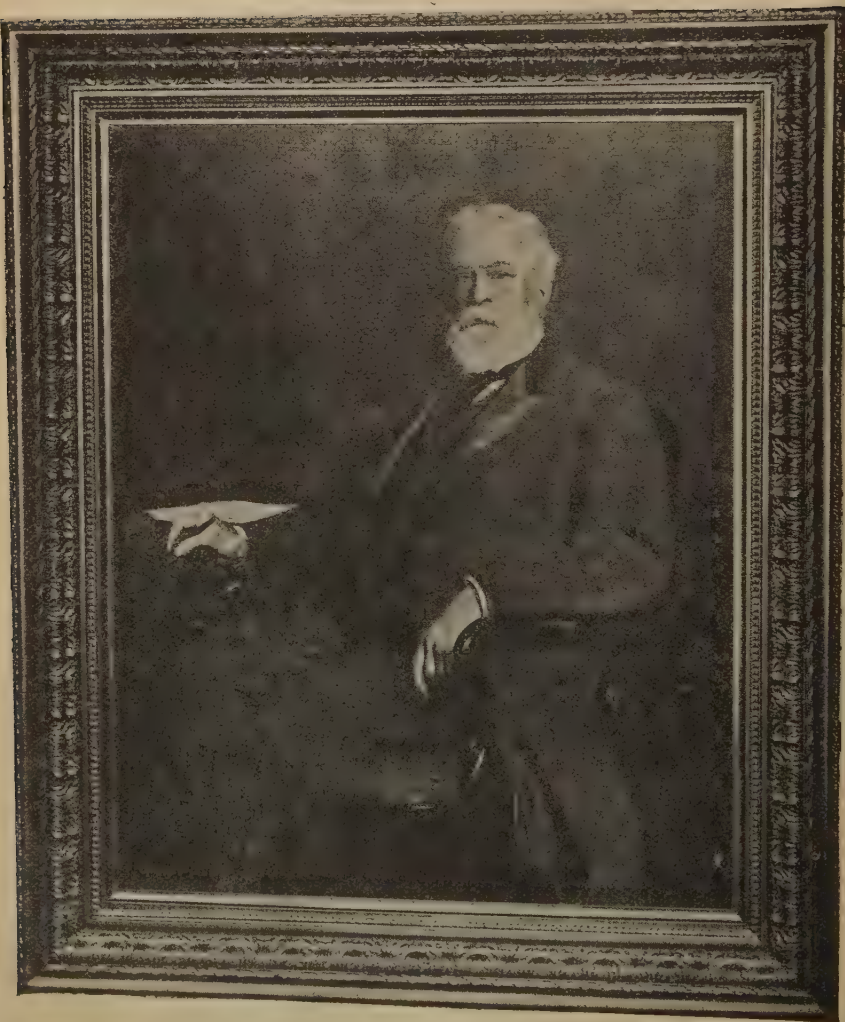
were due in a great measure to the example and precept of the home.

When the son was at the age of ten, his father died, and perhaps this early contact with death, had a sobering effect on his character, an influence that seemed to remain throughout life.

Sir Joseph decided early in life to give his leisure time to serve his fellow-men. He was made J.P., and at the age of twenty-four the Queen appointed him High Sheriff of Breconshire. For many years he was Chairman of Crickhowell Board of Guardians, and of other public bodies. In 1865 he became M.P. for Herefordshire, a position which, he filled with dignity for twenty years.

In thanksgiving for the recovery of his children from a dangerous attack of scarlet fever, he restored St. John's Church, Tretower. He built the Parish Room connected with it, to commemorate his silver wedding.

When Lord Tredegar, Lord Lieutenant of the County, died, in 1875, Sir J. R. Bailey succeeded him, and for thirty years, a lustre was shed on the office, which will be bright for many a year.



LORD GLANUSK.

In 1888 he was elected County Councillor for the Llangattock division—and never afterwards was he opposed. When the National Eisteddfod visited Brecon in 1889, he acted as President, in place of the Prince of Wales, who had failed to come; and later on, the Duke of Clarence, on his visit to Breconshire, was entertained by him at Glanusk for two days.

Sir Joseph retired from Parliament in 1892. Throughout the counties of Brecon, Radnor, Hereford, and Monmouth, there was much rejoicing, when he was honoured with a Peerage, for never had an honour been more deservedly won in the public service.

He was Chairman of the Breconshire County Council for many years. In 1905, the disease which had threatened him for years, now gripped him fatally. On Christmas Day, 1905, and a fortnight before his death, he attended Divine service in Tretower Church. His end was peace. He had suffered long and hard, but with a fine calmness and a truly Christian spirit.

Lord Glanusk was one of Nature's noblemen, and at his death a deep sense of loss to the whole county was realized. His busy life, his long period at the very pinnacle of the social life of Breconshire, and his noble character, endeared him to all classes of people. For forty years, he had devoted his time and his large attainments, to the service of his fellow-countrymen—a service fruitful of public good.

He was a keen antiquarian and archæologist, and was engaged at the time of his death upon a work intended to supplement Jones's History of Breconshire. He earned the affection and esteem of his tenants: for their welfare was ever one of his chief considerations,

Duty was his watchward. His leisure was his own; freely and generously he gave it to the people's service. There were in his character, integrity, courtesy, and dignity—all inspired by a deep religious faith, sincere and earnest.

Every good cause found in him a patron, and every denomination a friend; and the brilliance of his fame will long shine, in the hearts of the residents of the county and their descendants. The county lost a staunch and most faithful friend. He brushed aside the temptations of idleness and extravagance, and chose the rough road of "Duty" in public service—thus making his life useful and honourable. It would be generally acknowledged that the first man in the county as his Majesty's Representative was also the most capable leader of men.

CHAPTER XXXV.

PARISH OF LLANGYNIDR (THE CHURCH OF ST.
CYNIDR).

This parish is extensive, reaching from the Rhymney Iron-works to the Rivers Cwannon and Usk, on the north side. It is about twelve miles in length, and consists chiefly of mountain land. "Dyffryn Cwannon" (Vale of Cwannon) is one of those attractive vales of Brecknockshire, with the village of Llangynidr at its one end and the lofty craggy limestone mountain at its other end. Entering the valley from the Taf Fechan Valley, the descent is almost alarming, the road leading down past the Danydaren Farm being very steep.

The valley is about six miles long, deep and well-wooded, and the homesteads on the slope each side, show that there is good farming land. The river at the lower end, flows in a very deep glen, almost a ravine, and at last enters the Usk.

On a meadow of the Waenddu Farm (Black Meadow) some workmen, in clearing off the stones of an old cairn, in March of 1909, came upon an urn containing human bones. The whole cairn will now be explored.

The village stands on the right bank of the Usk, and occupies the high land overlooking the Vale of Usk. The main road from Crickhowell passes through to Talybont. Overlooking the village on the west stands the wooded peak called The Voel, as a sentinel guarding the vale below.

THE HUNDRED OF TALGARTH.

This includes the following parishes : Gwenddwr, Crickadarn, Llyswen, Llandefalle, Bronllys, Talgarth, Llanfihangel-tal-y-llyn, Langorse, Llanellieu, Glasbury, Hay, and Llanigon.

The Hundred occupies an eastern portion of the county, lying to the east of the county town, Brecon. The River Wye forms its boundary almost completely on one side, along whose banks we get some of the finest rural sights in the whole course of that river. The River Llynvi crosses it from Llangorse Lake to its confluence with the Wye. This stream flows through an open country, and the view of the river and its basin from the tower of Bronllys Castle, which stands on its banks, is one of knolls, meadows, and woodlands.

Talgarth and Hay are the chief towns. Near its southern end are the ruins of Blaenllyfni Castle, and the conical hill of Dinas, with its old castle commanding the Bwlch Pass leading to the Vale of Crickhowell.

About two miles to the south-east of the town of Talgarth, at the foot of the Black Mountains, nestles the Church of Llanellieu, which was restored about four years ago, by local subscriptions. Although small and unpretentious in appearance, this church has always been an object of interest to antiquarians. It consists merely of a nave and a chancel, and is dedicated to Saint Ellyw, a grand-daughter of Brychan Brycheiniog.

The rood-screen, which is of plain wood, has over it, a tympanum, an unusual freak of architecture. On the screen also are stamped both the white and the red roses. For during the Wars of the Roses the Yorkists and Lancastrians might any day visit the district, and the inhabitants, in order to

safeguard themselves, may have thought it wise to display the emblem of both parties alike. Another explanation for the emblems on the screen is, that they commemorate the Union of the Houses of York and Lancaster. Outside the churchyard is still to be seen a pair of stocks, in which prisoners were confined.

Early in the last century, a mound in a field in this parish was opened, and a spear-head of flint, seven inches long, and two inches broad at its widest part, was brought to light. If other mounds in the neighbourhood were searched, similar relics would doubtless be found. Flint weapons point to a period earlier, than that in which iron weapons were used, and are relics of a very remote age.

Across the lane, from the mound just mentioned, is an old manor house, which was at one time the headquarters of some of the Aubrey family, which held a very high position in the county. Among their descendants, the following are well-known: Viscount Hereford of Tregoyd (whose son, the Honourable R. C. Devereux, now occupies the mansion of Tregoyd), and Colonel Gough, of Ynyscedwyn. The old manor house, however, is now a farmhouse, whose ancient gateway has on its sides the following inscriptions:—

Exitus acta probat, 1676 (Our exit from life proves our deeds).

Sic hora sic vita (As the hours are spent so is our life).

Deus nobis haec otia fecit (God made these seasons of leisure for us), R.A., W.M.

Anno Domini (In the year of our Lord).

Noctua vola (Owl-bird of the night, fly away), 1676, W.A., H.T.

Non Jupiter (Not Jupiter even). Quidem omnibus placet (Pleases all persons).

Spes alit exules (Hope sustains the exiles).

The initials R.A. and W.A. are doubtless those of Richard Aubrey and William Aubrey. The owner of the property, Mr. John Price, is also the occupier.

The church is at present served by the Vicar of Bronllys. In the neighbourhood of the town of Talgarth are several large mansions (now farmhouses), once the homes of leading county families. Among these we may notice Trebarried, Dderw, Gwernyfed, and Trephilip.

TREBARRIED : This house is situated to the north of the main road, leading from Brecon to Hay, and on the right-hand of the road from Pontybat to Velin Newydd. No trace remains of the original mansion, which was occupied by the Bois, Lords of Trebois. However, in the middle of the seventeenth century, another house, whose magnificent gateways are still visible, was built by William Ap Harry (Parry) Vaughan. He was a descendant in the female line of the original owners, whose great grandson married Ann Gwyn of Hay Castle.

Frances Harley, of the family of the Earl of Oxford, was descended in the same line. Her memory is honoured to-day in the neighbourhood, for the munificent gift of The Harley Charity, with its two sets of alms-houses in Hay.

DDERW : Dderw is another historic house, close to the village of Llysven, though strictly speaking, it lies in the parish of Pipton—now absorbed into that of St. Peter's, Glasbury. For two or three generations, it was the residence of the "Morgans of Dderw and Ystradfellte," whose representative is Viscount Tredegar.

GWERNYFED : This is situated about two miles and a half from Talgarth, and is close to the little village of Velindre, on the upper road to Hay. It was formerly the seat of the

Williams' family, which numbered among its members, Sir David Williams, Judge of the Court of Queen's Bench, in the reign of Elizabeth, and founder of the Gwenddwr Charity. Sir Thomas Williams (a private physician to Charles II.) was another member of this family, which is now represented by Colonel Thomas Wood.

Charles I. spent the night at Gwernyfed, on 6th August, 1645. The chair in which the King sat at dinner is still in the possession of Colonel Wood. Gwernyfed is at present a farmhouse, but signs of its former grandeur still remain. An ancient inscription, running along the capitals of the pillars supporting the minstrels' gallery, attracts the notice of every visitor to the place.

Many learned antiquarians, in trying to make out its meaning, have been baffled in the attempt. The language in which it is written cannot be discovered, though the letters are perfectly legible. Formerly, there were churches at Aberllynfi and at Velindre, and it is said that the principal doorway of this house, was once the porch of one of these churches.

There is a superstition that ill-luck has dogged the footsteps of the inhabitants of this house ever since the porch of the sacred building has been put to this secular use.

TREPHILIP : Trephilip stands to the right of the high road from Hay to Brecon, on a spot near the seventh milestone from the county town. It was built by Philip Bullen, and became the property of the Vaughans of Porthamal, by marriage with the heiress of the Bullens. Tredustan was the house of the manor, given by Bernard Newmarch to Sir Humphrey Sollers. Both these houses, although now occupied as farms, still retain evident signs of having been built as headquarters of families of position in the county. The pre-

sent buildings were constructed by some later owners than those mentioned here.

TREGOYD is the home of the Devereux family, the head of which is Viscount Hereford, the Premier Viscount of England. The property came into their possession when Marianna Devereux, the heiress (whose mother belonged to a well-known Breconshire family—the Aubreys) married in 1768 her cousin George, Viscount Hereford.

The Devereux family had previously, for a great many years, been connected with Wales and the neighbouring counties. They held lands in the counties of Brecon, Pembroke, Montgomery, Hereford, and Shropshire.

Among the members of this family are the three celebrated Earls of Essex, namely, Walter, who was Earl Marshal of Ireland; Robert, the favourite of Queen Elizabeth, and Robert, who was the Commander of the Parliamentary Army in the Civil War, which resulted in the deposition of Charles I.

Sir Edward Devereux was M.P. for Tamworth in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; while Walter, the fifth Viscount, represented Stafford, Marlborough, Worcestershire, and Lichfield in the House of Commons at various times.

The present Peer's grandfather was a Privy Councillor, and a captain of the Hon. Corps of Gentlemen at Arms, and his father was Hon. Canon of Durham Cathedral. The Honourable R. C. Devereux, who now occupies Tregoyd, is the Chairman of the Breconshire Quarter Sessions, and of the Higher Education Committee of the County, as well as a County Councillor.

There is a story that one of the Viscounts Hereford owned six large estates, and in whichever house he happened to be dining at any time, he always had dinner served and

announced by the butler in all five others at the same hour. This may not be true, but the fact that anyone thought it worth while inventing such a story, shows the sort of extravagance that did go on in some families in days of old.

BRONLLYS (THE HILLSIDE NEAR THE COURT).

This is the name of a small village and castle about a mile from Talgarth, on the road from Brecon to Hay. It is said that the two fine yew trees by the church are about 1,000 years old. In the churchyard, there was a curious epitaph, supposed to be over the remains of a dancing-master, who fell from his horse and broke his neck :—

“ Man’s life is a vapour and full of woes,
He cuts a caper and—down he goes.”

THE CASTLE.

This ancient ruin stands on the banks of the Llyfni, and within its grounds is the mansion of Bronllys Court. The castle is built on high ground, and the view from the top of the tower is charming. To beautify its decay, nature has kindly planted moss, shrub, and trees, while the “ivy-mantled” tower is a rare object, inviting the artist with his brush to put on canvas a painting worthy of a place on the walls of any mansion. Owls and birds here find an ideal home.

This castle was probably built by William the Conqueror, in 1079, or 1080, and afterwards repaired by Rufus. The round tower and keep remain, rising perpendicularly to a great height directly over the Llyfni River. In the days of Llewelyn, Prince of Wales, this portion was full of warriors, and played an important part in the destiny of Wales.

In old times it was surrounded by fine buildings, all of which have crumbled into dust, but the tower now standing has defied the storms of time, to tell its tale of by-gone days. At the bottom of the mound on which it stands is an entrance, but the original entrance is much higher up the wall. It is composed of two pieces of stone, bending so as to meet in a kind of arch at the top. The mortar binding the small stones of which the building is made, must have been of some material very different from that used in our days.

About the year 1450, a noted Welsh bard, whose name was Bedo Bronllys, lived in the Castle. His fame was known throughout Wales for having collected together the poems of one of the earliest and finest Welsh lyrical poets, Dafydd ap Gwilym.

It is said that Giffard, afterwards the Governor of Builth Castle, had charge of this castle to oppose the efforts of Llewelyn, Prince of Wales.

LLYSWEN (THE WHITE COURT).

This place is so-called because it was formerly one of the mansions of the Princes of South Wales, where Roderick the Great appointed the Princes of Cardigan and Powys to settle their disputes. The village stands in a fertile country, on the right bank of the Wye, and the woods and slopes around make it one of the prettiest neighbourhoods in the county.

The grand palace of the Prince of South Wales—Roderick the Great—has long disappeared, and another mansion, 'Llangoed,' occupies the site. This was built about 1633, and at one time was owned by Sir David Williams, the Judge. Its situation on the banks of the Wye is very pleasant, for the river here is a majestic stream surrounded by fine trees and abundant foliage.

The park is noted for its beauty and rich soil, which is, by some, considered the finest in the county. Over the door are the initials "H.W." and the date 1633, together with the arms of Einon Sais, or Williams, cut in stone. At a short distance from the door is a large ancient stone called "Maen Hir."



THE WYE AT LLYSWEN.

LLANDEFALLE.

This rural parish is interesting for its remains of a small British camp, and also its connection through the name of a lane, "Heol Einon" ("Einon's Road"), with a lord of Elvel (Radnorshire), called Einon. His name often occurs in the history of the struggles for independence against the English King. He married a daughter of Rhys ab Tewdwr, with whom he had property in this parish. Einon also was the friend and assistant of Giraldus Cambrensis on his travels through this county and Radnorshire.

CATHEDINE.

Some derive the name of this parish from "Tir-y-Caeth-ddyn," "Caeth-Ddyn" becoming "Cathedine" —the land of the slave. This was part of the territory of Gwrgan ap Bleddyn ap Maenarch, who was sent by Bernard Newmarch as a prisoner to dwell on his own lands, and which he was forbidden to leave.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TALGARTH (THE END, OR FRONT OF THE HILL).

Talgarth, an important market town, stands on the banks of the River Enig, in the midst of a wide stretch of open, but hilly, country. It is reached from Brecon by road or by rail, and is about ten miles distant. The name "Tal-Garth" is derived from its situation in front of the high chain of hills called the Black Mountains.

The Bridge over the River Enig takes its name "Ponty-twr" ("The Tower Bridge") from a square tower supposed to have been the ancient borough gaol.

Talgarth and neighbourhood abound in objects of interest, for, in the distance, is seen Trefecca College, now used as a preparatory school, but at one time it was filled with students. And in the days of the famous Howell Harris thousands of people met here for religious service. Two miles eastward, in a field called "Croesllechau" ("Cross Stones") may be seen a large cromlech, and two burial mounds of the ancient Britons—one on a farm called Ffostyll, and another at Tredustan Court. A third mound, containing human bones and bronze implements, was cut open when making the Hereford, Hay & Brecon Railway in the district.

In the Parish of Talgarth, and commanding the mountain pass to Crickhowell and the eastern parts of the Vale of Usk, is Dinas Castle, on the top of a high, steep, conical hill of the same name. Some believe, that this castle was built by the ancient Britons first, and that Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, attacked it. However, in the time of Owen Glyn-

dwr, during the reign of Henry IV., the castle was destroyed by the inhabitants to prevent Glyndwr occupying it.

The Parish Church of Talgarth is one of the largest in the county, and the stone-basin for holy water fixed in the wall, on the right-hand side of the door, is supposed to be six hundred or seven hundred years old; while in the churchyard, lie the remains of the famous preacher Howell Harris.

On the hill called the "Gadair" (a part of the Black Mountains) several stone circles and entrenchment, traces of ancient Britons still remain.

Within half-a-mile of Talgarth Church, stands the embattled wall of Porthaml (many Portals), once a fine mansion, and the residence of Sir William Vaughan, the first High Sheriff of the county, in 1539. It is now a farmhouse.

Near the town is a fine, large, stone building, the Asylum, serving the joint counties of Radnor and Brecknock.

The three brothers, Joseph, Thomas, and Howell Harris, deserve to be mentioned in connection with the little town of Talgarth, for they were, each in his own way, very eminent men. Their family first came from Carmarthenshire, and were respectable yeomen.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

EMINENT PERSONS OF THE TALGARTH HUNDRED

JOSEPH HARRIS.

Joseph Harris was the eldest son, and from a village blacksmith he rose, through talent and hard work, to an important position in the Mint, London, where he was engaged in examining and testing the coins as they came forth from the press. His knowledge of science was very great, for he wrote several books and invented mathematical instruments.

His natural ability is further shewn in his works on Astronomy; and the Cabinet Ministers of the day consulted him on important matters before Parliament. He is an example of a man without any push or boast, who rose to a very high position—all through merit.

In September, 1764, he died in the Tower of London, where he lies buried. On his monument in Talgarth we read these words: "He invented many mathematical instruments, and his political talents were well known to the ministers of the day, who failed not to improve upon all the wise and learned ideas which greatness of mind and love of country led him to give."

THOMAS HARRIS.

Thomas, the second brother, was another instance of success, attending industry and honesty. Settling in London, as a tailor, his good humour and winning ways won for him the esteem of influential persons, who secured for him the

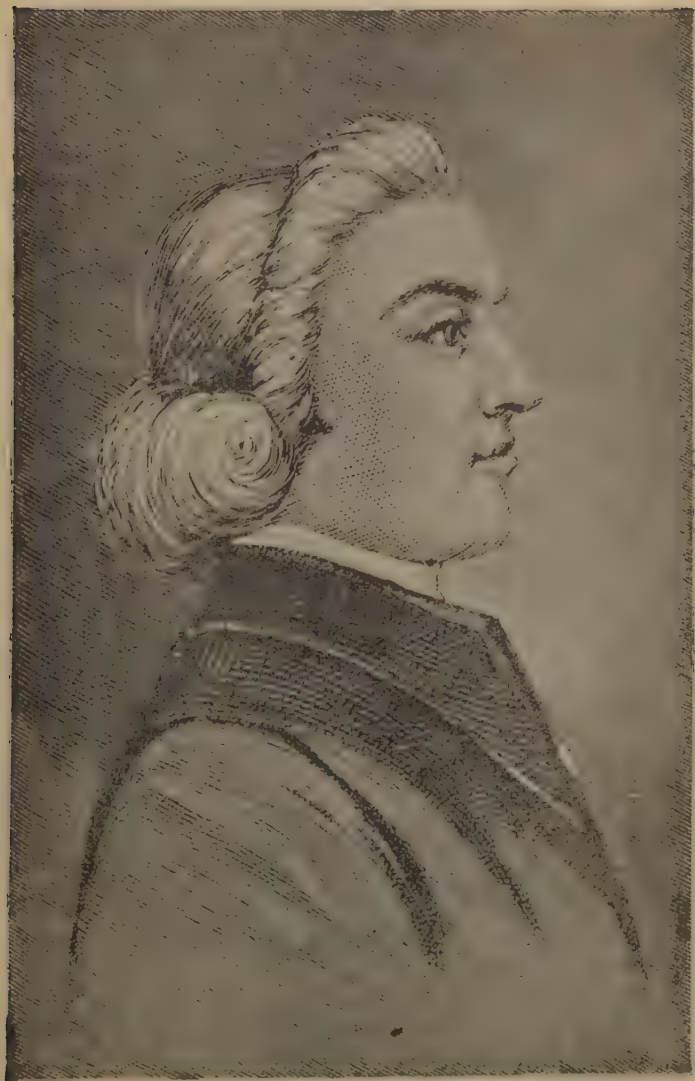
contract for supplying the Army with clothing. This settled his fortune, for after some years he became very rich, and retired to his native county. He had bought the Tregunter estates, which produced him about a thousand pounds a year. In 1768 he was Sheriff of the county, and died in 1782, aged 77, leaving behind him the reputation as a good neighbour, a friend of the poor, and a truly honest man.

The Tregunter Estate was first given by Bernard Newmarch to Sir Peter Gunter, a Norman Knight, who settled in these parts.

JANE WILLIAMS (YSGAFELL).

Another worthy person of Talgarth was *Ysgafell*, who lived at Neuadd Felin, Talgarth, being one of the Williamses of Neuadd Felin. This talented lady devoted her life to study and writing, and her works have earned for her a high reputation as a historian and authoress. While in Talgarth, she wrote her greatest work, which is one of the most interesting and able biographies of the day, "The life and writings of the Rev. Thomas Price, Carnhuanawc," in two thick volumes. Miss Williams in this work proved herself to be an ardent and loyal admirer of her country and its language. She also wrote "Literary Women of the 17th Century," a large book which commanded a good sale in its day, and, in the year 1869, she published "The History of Wales." In this book she shows extensive knowledge, and the tone and judgment of a good historian. A book of poems describing the scenery and legends of her native county was published by her privately. "The History of the Parish of Glasbury, Brecknockshire," was also written by her. The late Major Williams, of Talgarth, was her brother, and Mrs. John Price, Bank Terrace, Talgarth, her sister.

Miss Williams died on the 15th March, 1885, at Chelsea, London, at the advanced age of 80 years.



HOWELL HARRIS.

HOWELL HARRIS.

No name is more well-known in the religious life of this county than that of Howell Harris, for he took such a great part in the greatest religious revival that has yet stirred the country. The age in which he lived was a time when other famous religious reformers shook the whole of Wales. Daniel Rowlands, Llangeithio, George Whitfield, and John Wesley swayed the people with the gospel truths.

A farmhouse, called Trefecca Fawr, in the parish of Talgarth was the birthplace of Howell Harris, on January 23rd, 1714. His father, a respectable yeoman, came to Breconshire from the county of Carmarthen, and his three sons, of whom Howell was the youngest, became famous, each in his own way.

Howell was intended by his parents to be a clergyman, and therefore he received the best training which the schools of the neighbourhood could give him, but at the age of eighteen his plans were broken owing to his father's death. He was always very clever with his lessons—learning was an easy matter to him, although the people looked upon him as a wild and giddy young fellow.

As he could not hope to go on with his college course, he opened a school at Trefecca for young children. Three years thus passed until, one Sabbath morning, March 30, 1735, at Church, some words from the vicar about the Lord's Supper, which was to take place on the following Sunday, made him resolve to prepare himself for the holy rite on that Sunday. The preacher had said: "If you are not fit to come to the Lord's Table, you are not fit to come to Church; you are neither fit to live nor die." He had now decided to lead a new life, and, on his way home, he turned to make peace with a neighbour, but his enemy.

He grew more thoughtful and serious, was given to prayer, and tried to keep his heart and thoughts fixed on the Lord. His past life troubled him, and he began to feel in a very strange manner that he was a "sinner," and on the broad way to destruction. Several weeks were passed, and his burden seemed to get heavier. A great change was coming over him. It was clear that some inward struggles were going on in his soul. He himself described his condition in these words: "At the Sacrament, by viewing my Saviour on the Cross, I was delivered from these temptations.

The world, and all thoughts of worldly praise and honour vanished from my mind. I became a pilgrim and stranger here below; all my heart was drawn from the world and visible things, and was seeking more valuable riches. Now I could talk of nothing but spiritual things. I only knew this, that God loved me and would, for His own name's sake love me freely to the end. The fear of losing what I then had, kept me constantly watching and praying."

Howell was now a changed man, the spark of fire that had kindled in his soul put Wales all ablaze in a few years. His friends became alarmed at his conduct, for every chance he had, he would denounce the evil ways and sinful habits of all, rich and poor alike. The people listening to him, felt there was some strange and awful power working upon them. He still intended becoming a clergyman, and his friends were glad to hear that he had gone to the University of Oxford, thinking that would once more cure him of his strange conduct.

Howell, however, only remained there one term, and he left for home fully resolved not to return again to Oxford. He was now offered the mastership of a Grammar School, or a clergyman's position if he finished his university career. But it was all in vain. In the year 1736 he became a school-

master, carrying on this work in Talgarth Parish Church. He now took every chance in his way to speak to people of their sins and their duty to God. About this time a man was going about the villages teaching Psalm-singing, and Howell Harris went with him, and talked to the young people about the salvation of their souls.

The houses were crowded with people following him in his preaching. Very soon no building could contain the congregations, and there was a real change to be observed in the habits of the people. Family worship was established in many homes; the churches at every service were crammed with listeners. The great revival was spreading like wild-fire and swaying the people; drinking and other evil habits were checked, and a wonderful improvement in habits was observed over the whole neighbourhood.

That mighty preaching, which roused Wales from the sleep of ages in this great Methodist Revival, had now commenced. But this kind of preaching in the houses, and in the open air, annoyed a section of the Church, although Harris did not wish to offend against the rules of that Church, which he loved so much. However, he was thrown out of his position as schoolmaster at the Parish Church, and was called a deceiver and false prophet. This grieved him very much, for he had no idea of forming a new sect; yet he could not give up preaching to his fellow-countrymen.

He went to fairs, wakes, and feasts to preach, and he preached with remarkable power and affect. Many old evil customs were put down. He "thundered" till the people trembled in his presence, and even shouted and cried, as if they felt themselves in the very grip of the Great God. It was not uncommon for two thousand to stand for over two hours in the drizzling rain, to hear him preach.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The same effects were produced in England by Whitfield and by Daniel Rowlands in Cardiganshire. In 1839 Harris visited North Wales, and the same power was felt wherever he went. Many, however, looked upon him as an impostor, and he was often in peril of his life.

Harris and a friend were mobbed nearly to death at Newport, Pontypool, Usk and Monmouth. He speaks of some of his troubles in these words :—

“ In North Wales, I was seven nights in succession during this journey, without undressing, and travelled one hundred miles from the morning of one day to the evening of another without having any rest, preaching at midnight, or in the early morning, on the mountains.”

But in this respect, he was not different from other great reformers. It now became necessary to form Societies; and the “ Monthly Meeting ” and “ Association ” were started, and Howell Harris was chosen a kind of pastor over all these flocks.

The country then formed into two large divisions, “ The Flock of Rowlands ” and “ The Flock of Harris,” overlooked by these two Apostles.

Harris, after some time gave up his travelling and remained at home, preaching daily to all who came to hear him.

In the year 1755 a large house, called Trefecca House, was built near Talgarth. Friends assisted him with money to do this. People came from different parts of the country to stay a few days in this house, in order to see and hear Harris,

and to attend the meetings regularly held there. In this way a kind of family occupied the place. Farmers came to settle in the district to join this body of religious people around Harris, so that at the end of 1755 there were about 120 members of this "family."



TREFECCA COLLEGE.

Towards the end of 1759, when this country seemed likely to be invaded by the French, Harris became a captain in the Militia, and commanded twenty-four men as his followers, twelve of whom he kept at his own expense. For three years he moved thus with his men from town to town, at the same time preaching the gospel whenever he had the chance. After the war was over, he and his men returned to Trefecca, and he joined the Vicar at Talgarth in religious work.

In 1744 Harris married Ann, daughter of John Williams, Esq., of the Screen and Erwood, but she died in 1770, leaving her husband and daughter to mourn her loss.

The Countess of Huntingdon, a rich lady, assisted Harris with money in his work, and took a house called Lower Trefecca to be used as a college for young preachers. She was anxious that the college should be at Trefecca, in order that the students should come under the influence of Howell Harris. He, however, lived only five years after the college was opened.

Harris died July 21, 1773, at the age of 60, and was buried in Talgarth Church. He left his property to the "family" at Trefecca, after providing for his daughter.

On July 21, 1873, a beautiful chapel was opened at Trefecca, built by the Methodists, of whom he may be called the "Father." This cost three thousand pounds.

His funeral will long be remembered. No fewer than twenty thousand persons met on this sad occasion. Some had travelled far to show their respect to this great apostle of Breconshire. Three platforms were erected, and nine sermons—three from each—were preached to the vast crowds, hundreds of whom were in tears during the service.

In Talgarth Church these are some of the words on a tablet :—

"Here, where his body lies, he was convinced of sin, had his pardon sealed, and felt the power of Christ's precious blood. Having tested grace, he resolved to declare to others what God had done for his soul. He preached the Gospel for 39 years, until he was taken to his final rest. His end was more blessed than his beginning. He fell asleep in Jesus at

Trefecca, July 21, 1773, and now rests blessed from his labours."

The Methodist College at Trefecca was re-opened in 1865, and up to a few years ago students for the Methodist ministry were educated here. The Rev. J. H. Jones, M.A., Ph.D., the Rev. J. Charles Davies, M.A., and the Rev. W. Howells, M.A., are among the able men who have been on the staff of the college.

HAY—RAILWAY STATION AND RIVER WYE.



CHAPTER XXXIX.

HAY.

This pretty town, with a population of about 1,680 people, is situated in the extreme east of the county, on the borders of Brecknock, Radnor, and Hereford. It is built on rising ground, on the south bank of the Wye, and is about 375ft. above the sea-level, its rainfall in the year 1906 being only 30 inches, the lowest in the county. The town was at one time surrounded by a strong wall, having in it three gates and a postern.

The present name, Hay, seems to be from a French word, *hair*—to enclose. In Welsh the name is *Tre-Gelli*, or, *Y Gelli*—the town in the forest—there being in olden times extensive forests in the neighbourhood.

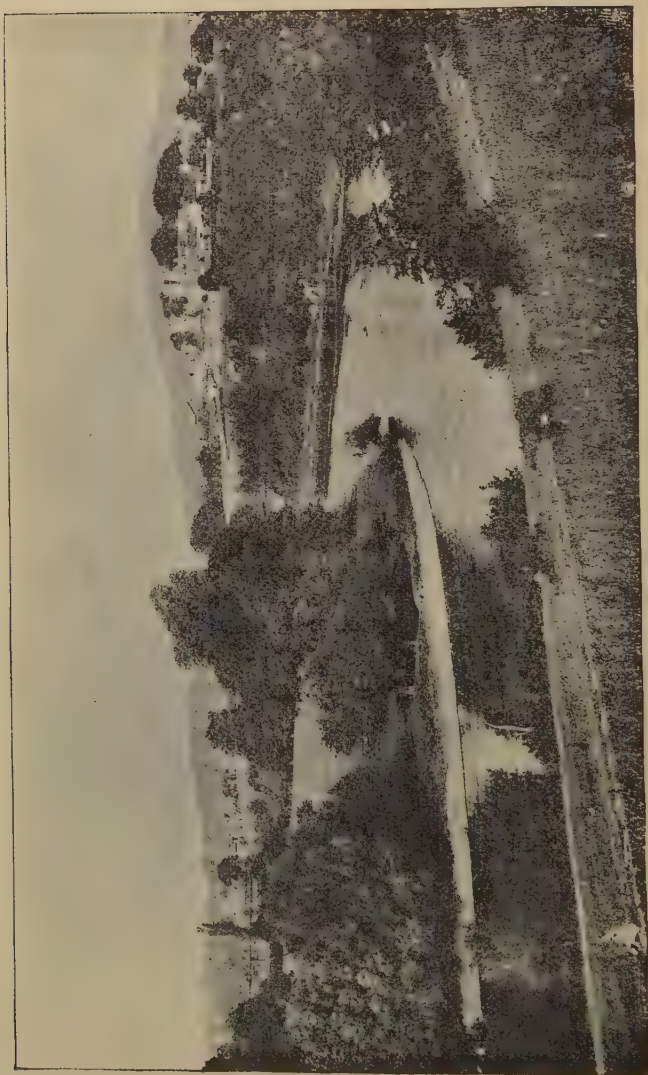
The district around Hay—called the “Manor of Hay”—has been famous in the history of the Norman possession of the county. It is first mentioned at the time when Newmarch defeated Bleddyn ap Maenarch, and thus for ever took from the natives their liberty. Sir Philip Walwyn was presented with the Hay Manor by the Norman Conqueror, and it is very likely that Hay Castle was erected by Sir Philip for a residence, where he could protect his manor lands.

After many years, William de Breos, the cruel murderer, held these lands, and his wife, the renowned Maud de Haia, no doubt, lived here at one time. Her end, however, was a sad one, for her husband, having offended King John, had to leave the country, and she, together with William her son, were thrown into a dungeon in Windsor Castle, where both perished.

On a plateau to the south of Hay a large tumulus is seen. This marks the spot where, in their gallant stand against Edward I., the Welsh Chieftains were murdered, and their dead buried. It was said that for three days after the slaughter, the water of the River Dulais was red with the blood of the slain. The name of the mound where the bones of those who are supposed to have died in battle is Twyn-y-beddau—"the mound of graves."

Like many other towns on the borders of England, Hay was for several centuries engaged in the flannel trade. A large flannel factory was built here, and for many years a great number of weavers were employed. But as steam-power and large mills were put up in England, the home-spun flannel industry gradually ended. The town now depends chiefly on its market and fairs. In order to connect it with Brecon, and to carry on the traffic of coal and lime, the Hay tram railway was constructed at a cost of £100,000, and in the year 1820 it was extended to Kington. The improvement in the roads and the construction of the Hereford, Hay & Brecknock Railway robbed it of the trade, and in the making of the railway the tramway was taken up and used in the new railway. As far back as 1631 we find Hay was noted for its corn market, for we read "wheat was sold in the market of Hay, being the chief corn market of the county, for 7s. a bushel."

The street lamps were first lit with gas in 1840, when the price of gas was 15s. per thousand cubic feet. Some idea of the cost of gas at that time can be had when we remember that in many towns the price now is 3s. per thousand cubic feet.



HAY FROM WARREN.

HAY NEIGHBOURHOOD.

It is a common error among the natives of this part, to call Hay, the "Welsh Hay"; whereas this name belongs to Llanigon—a district adjoining Hay, on the South. In the old records of the two manors, the one on the English border, viz., Hay, was always known as "Haia Anglicana," or "English Hay," while that of Llanigon was "Haia Wallensis," or Welsh Hay.

In the notices summoning the tenants of the manor to the Court Leets, held periodically on behalf of Lord Glanusk and Viscount Hereford (the lords of the two manors), these names are still used to denote the respective manors. It is, therefore, difficult to know how the mistake arose.

An interesting object to many is the old house on the right-hand side of the Brecon Road, as one leaves Hay, about a hundred yards from the old turnpike. Here John Wesley himself frequently preached. It is, however, no longer used as a meeting house, being now a carpenter's shop.

There is, in Llanigon parish, an interesting old barn, where a school was once kept. Here William Williams, of Pantycelyn, the sweet hymn-writer of Wales, received part of his early education. This is on Llanthomas Farm.

Leaving Hay by a road known as the Forest Road, which leads to the east towards Monmouthshire, we pass the Forest Farm and Twynybeddau, mentioned above. We then enter the Black Mountains Range, through the Bwlch Eifengyl, or Gospel Pass. It is said that the "pass" derives its name from the fact that St. Paul walked over it, but there seems no foundation for this legend.

Still, those responsible for the story go so far into details as to assert, that he lost one of his

shoes there. However, Wales is, no doubt, within her right in asserting her claim to a part of those two years of the Apostle's life, which are not accounted for. Some say he visited India during that period. It is more probable, however, that the name Gospel Pass, owes its origin to the rumour that Archbishop Baldwin and Giraldus Cambrensis, on their famous missionary tour through Wales, rode through the pass. Another authority suggests, as the real name of the place, "Bwlch-y-fan-cul," "the pass of the narrow spot."

About seven miles from Hay, along the Forest Road, we come to the boundary between Breconshire and Monmouthshire. Here, at the junction of the two streams, the Honddu and Nantybwlch, is a small village known as Capel-y-Ffin (the Chapel of the boundary) where we find three interesting objects. The first we shall notice is the church.

There is nothing attractive in the building itself, nor have any legends made it famous. The long dispute, however, between the Vicar of Glasbury and Llanigon, as to which of the two parishes, can claim the church as its own, has attracted much attention. Most of the inhabitants of the parish paid their tithes in Glasbury; but owing to the distance of the church from that village, the Vicar of Glasbury was unwilling to serve it, especially as no salary was attached to the office.

For similar reasons the Vicar of Llanigon declined the honour, and in 1708 the case was tried in the Ecclesiastical Courts. While many witnesses urged that the church was in the hamlet of Blaenbwch, in the parish of Glasbury, all agreed that it was a chapel-of-ease of Llanigon; and the vicar of that parish was made responsible for the services there. Now a small stipend is attached to the living, and the Vicar of

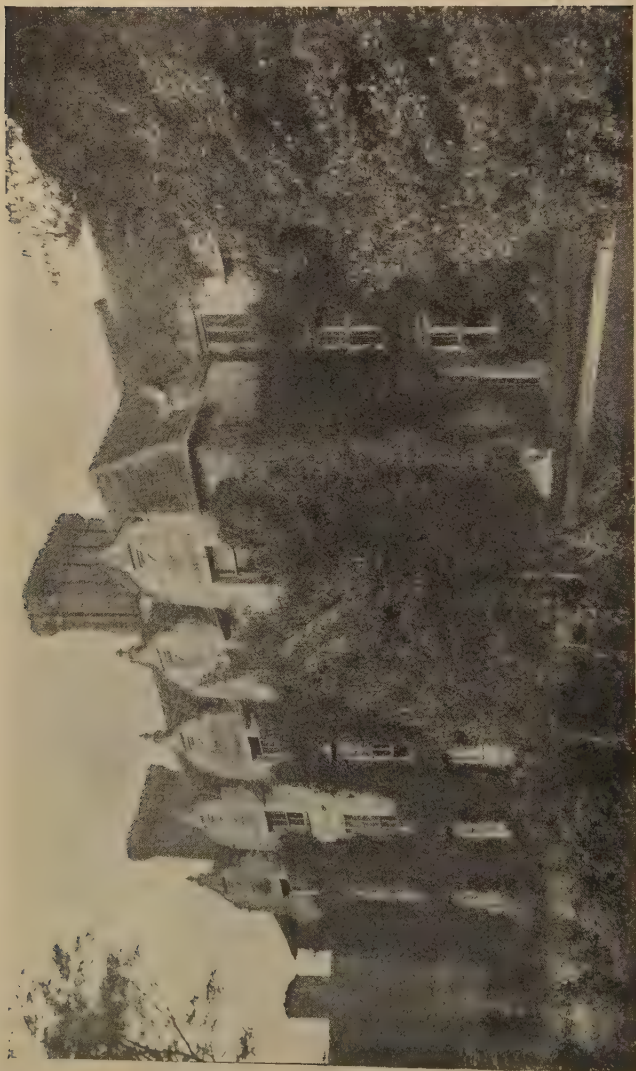
Cwmyoy, a neighbouring parish, in the county of Monmouth, officiates as curate to the Vicar of Llanigon.

Another object to be noticed in the village of Capel y Ffin, is a Baptist chapel, said to be one of the oldest in the county, and is very interesting from the quaint inscription on the gravestones. In 1762 a Mr. Prosser gave a piece of land for the site of the chapel.

About a quarter of a mile to the south, in the valley, is a Benedictine Monastery. It was built in 1870, by one of the most eloquent, though somewhat eccentric characters of the present generation, the late Rev. Joseph Leicester Lyne—Father Ignatius. There are very few persons within a ten-mile radius from the spot, who, irrespective of denomination, have not some time or other, attended the services at the Monastery on either Ascension Day or on the 30th of August—the anniversary of a supposed vision of the Virgin Mary.

Though Father Ignatius denied he was a Roman Catholic, yet all the rites of that religion such as the bowing to the image of the Virgin Mary, the swinging of incense, kneeling and making the sign of the cross, were carried out during the service. In spite, however, of all this, and of a certain theatrical style of preaching, so earnest was the Rev. Father, that everyone who attended the service went away deeply impressed by the solemnity of the whole ceremony.

The somewhat unusual career of Father Ignatius is too well known to need mention here. All who knew him, or heard him, however widely they might differ from his opinions, however much they might dislike his public actions, could not but feel the great charm and the attractive personality of the man. He was, in a true sense, a type of a sincere religious monk.



HAY CASTLE FROM THE SOUTH.

Returning from the Monastery, over the hill, we pass on our left, the round peak (the highest point of this range), known as Lord Hereford's Nob, or the Twmpath. Following the Digedi Brook, which flows northward into the Wye, we come to the little village of Llanigon, with its curious barn-like church, having no tower, but adorned with a cross at its east and west gable ends.

A curiosity in this church is the old organ, which was in use up to the middle of last century. It could be made, even in its old age, to grind out a limited number of tunes and chants at the service, and is still kept in the west end of the church.

At the Church Congress, held in Swansea, in the year 1909, the organ was exhibited, when it excited a good deal of interest.

Another peculiar feature is the schoolroom inside the churchyard—a rather unusual place for a school in these days. It was endowed in 1714, by one Lewis Watkins, with the rental of a farm called Caerbwrla, in the parish, for the maintenance of a Free School. Like the early schools of our country, it has passed through many changes in its mode of teaching. At one time the scholars were taught in a somewhat irregular fashion by a parish clerk. Now, however, it is recognised as a Non-Provided School.

A curious instance of a manor within a manor, which has now disappeared, is that of Llanthomas, in this parish. In 1522 it was in the hands of Walter Devereux, Earl Ferrers, Chief Justice of South Wales, and there is evidence that it carried with it independent memorial rights at a later period.

Now, however, these rights have disappeared, and more curious still, the boundary between the Manors of Hay (*Haia Anglicana*) and Llanigon (*Haia Wallensis*) passes through the house of Llanthomas, which is situated just below the

road leading from Llanigon to Velindre. When, therefore, the owner of the property dies, since a part of the house is situated in each manor the claim for the heriot (a duty paid to the lord of the manor on the death of the owner) might perhaps be made by the two lords.

That, however, will depend upon the situation of the bedroom, in which the tenant has slept. In whatever manor the room stands, the lord of that manor will receive the "heriot." This house was once owned by William Thomas, who was tutor to King Edward VI.

HAY CASTLE.

This Norman castle was built about the time of William the Conqueror. It is still an imposing building, although the storms and the decay of centuries have greatly changed its appearance. Sir Philip Walwyn is said to have erected it, and, during the war-like days in the history of the county, many stirring tales are told of the use made of it, for garrisons and Lords Marchers. The late Sir Joseph Bailey, of Glanusk Park, was the owner of the castle. The square tower, clothed with ivy, and a gateway adjoining the tower to the east, are the only traces of it. The tower was doubtless the keep, or dungeon, for the prisoners. The gateway is well preserved, and has remaining on it signs showing a portcullis, or drawbridge, over a moat that surrounded the place. The gate is situated outside the town walls, and there is seen a broad flight of stone steps, which gave a very stately appearance to the entrance. In the old times the parish jury who attended the Court Leet, were led to the gate, and there "sworn in" before the meeting.

The Conqueror of Breconshire, Bernard Newmarch, held in his own hands the castles of Brecknock, Hay, and Aber-

gavenny. Hay Castle was at times his residence. Other famous Norman governors held it, among whom were the De Breos family, one of whose sons, William, about the end of the twelfth century, married the noted Maud de Haia, of



HAY CASTLE.

whom many strange and interesting stories are told. She is called Maud de Haia either from having rebuilt the castle, or because she resided here for some time.

One legend tells us that she built the castle in one night, carrying stones for it in her apron. While she was thus employed, a small pebble about nine feet long and one foot thick, dropped into her shoe. This she did not

at first heed, but finding it troublesome, she, in her rage, threw it over the Wye into Llowes Churchyard—about three miles off—where it remains to this day—a memorial of the great feat.

At one time the castle was owned by Llewelyn, Prince of North Wales, and King John burnt it down; but Henry III., in 1231, rebuilt it, and after keeping possession of it for some years, handed it over to Humphrey de Bohun, one of his Norman nobles. The Castle and Manor of Hay have since then passed through many hands. In the reign of Elizabeth, and whilst the castle was in possession of the Gwynn family of Trecastle, the present mansion was built upon a part of the site of the old castle. In the year 1702 we find the mansion let in apartments to different families. The castle now stands mute, pointing back to the warlike past when king and nobleman once ruled there in pomp and power. The famous old fortress has seen some warlike times, as shown by the bullet scars which mark the original oak doors still remaining.

SENATOR JONES, OF HAY.

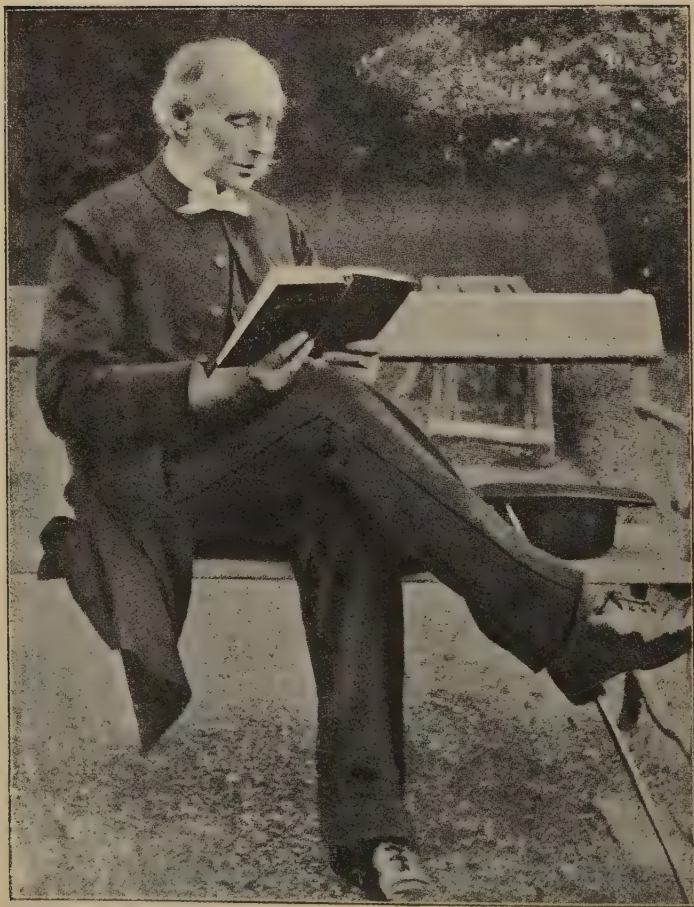
The Hon. J. P. Jones, who, in his day, was one of the four richest men in the world, lived in America. His parents natives of Hay, had emigrated into that country, and their illustrious son became famous, not only as one of the great Silver Kings of that Continent, but also as a clever and eminent member of the Senate, or Parliament. When Nellie, daughter of President Grant, married, the wedding present of Jones was a cheque for 100,000 dollars. On matters of finance, it is said, he had no rival in the whole of the New World.

THE VEN. ARCHDEACON W. L. BEVAN, M.A.

The Venerable Archdeacon of Brecon, W. L. Bevan, was one of the county's illustrious sons, and when his death took place, August 24, 1908, all mourned the loss of a great scholar and a distinguished Christian gentleman. From his youth, and through the ripe years of manhood, on till his old age, he grew in wisdom and influence for good. Even those who differed from him on many important matters, were ready to honour a talented and good man.

William Latham Bevan was born on May 21, 1820, at Beaufort, on the borders of the county of Brecon, adjoining Monmouthshire. His parents were able to give their promising son, the best education of the day. He was therefore sent to Rugby, the famous public school, when the renowned Dr. Arnold was its headmaster. The lad showed signs of unusual talent, and he had a very successful school career. Leaving Rugby, after a short stay at Balliol College, Oxford, he won a valuable scholarship, and was elected a Lusby Scholar at Hertford College, formerly called Magdalen Hall. In due course he took his degree of M.A. in 1845 with honours.

After spending a year as curate in East Stepney, London, he returned to his native county as Vicar of Hay, and for the next fifty-six years of his life, he devoted himself with great zeal to the welfare of his people, who truly loved him as their pastor and friend. Being a ripe scholar, he divided his valuable time between his parochial duties and literary work. We need only mention the different books that he wrote to show the wide field of his study: Two Text-books on Geography; "Manual of Ancient Geography," and another on Modern Geography.



THE VEN. ARCHDEACON W. L. BEVAN, M.A.

He also contributed some articles to "Smith's Dictionary of the Bible," as well as a "History of the Diocese of St. David's," published in 1888. The Archdeacon was a friend of the famous explorer, Dr. Livingstone, and assisted the renowned traveller in writing some of his books. Several handbooks dealing with Bible manners and customs came from his pen. Wales, however, knew him best as the stalwart champion of the Church of England, and Churchmen owe a great deal to the letters and pamphlets written by him on Church Defence.

But even when writing in strong terms against his opponents, he was always courteous, and never lost the reputation of a perfect Christian gentleman. Those who could not agree with him, respected his views and admired his character.

In 1876 he was appointed Prebendary of Llanddewi Aberarth, in St. David's Cathedral. Other honours were bestowed upon him, and his sound judgment and wide knowledge were considered of real value in the highest Courts of the Church.

Up till 1895, he was Vicar of Hay, but was then appointed Archdeacon of Brecon, and in 1901, having resigned the living of Hay, he came to reside at Ely Tower, Brecon. As might be expected, he commanded the reputation of a cultured and earnest preacher: the people listened to him with sincere reverence and admiration.

In 1907 the duties of his office became too heavy for his advanced age, and he therefore resigned his position as Archdeacon. To the great satisfaction of the parishioners, his son, the Vicar of Brecon, Rev. E. L. Bevan, M.A., was appointed to succeed his father as Archdeacon of Brecon.

Even when over 80 years of age he had worked hard among his people, and, in spite of repeated offers of preferment, the

Archdeacon chose to remain in his beloved parish of Hay, and to labour to the end of his long life in his native county.

While his physical strength was ebbing away, and his eyesight was becoming dim, his mind remained vigorous—even up to the fatal morning of August 24. On that day he became unconscious, and passed peacefully away to his well-earned and eternal rest, at the age of eighty-eight. His remains rest in Hay Cemetery.

Archdeacon W. L. Bevan was truly a great scholar, a deep thinker, a learned historian, a trusted adviser, and a successful parish priest. Above all, his manly Christian character and life-long service in the Church have won for him an honourable place in records of the eminent men of our county.

CHAPTER XL.

MERTHYR CYNOG HUNDRED.

This district lies to the south of the Builth Hundred, and includes the parishes of St. John the Evangelist, St. Mary's, part of St. David's and Llanddew, most of Garth-brengy, Merthyr Cynog, Llandefaillog, Battle, Aberyscir, Trallwng, Llanfihangel Nantbran and Llandilo'r Fân.

The Epynt Hills form the greater part of the northern boundary, while for about 10 miles the Usk forms the southern limit. The slope of the Epynt is drained by the Rivers Honddu, Yscir, Bran, and Cilieni.

The landscape consists of beautiful, rich farm lands, and fine woods stretch away from the Usk to the Epynt.

The chief places in this Hundred are : Brecon, the county town ; Merthyr Cynog, Gwenddwr, Llanfihangel Nantbrân, Llandilo'r Fan, Lower Chapel, and Trallwng.

BRECON.

It is not often we find a county town situated in so central a position as Brecon, for a journey of about sixteen miles along any of the four main roads will bring us to the borders of one of the adjoining counties. The English name of the town is after Brychan, while the Welsh name, Aberhonddu, is given to it from its position on the junction of the river Honddu with the Usk.

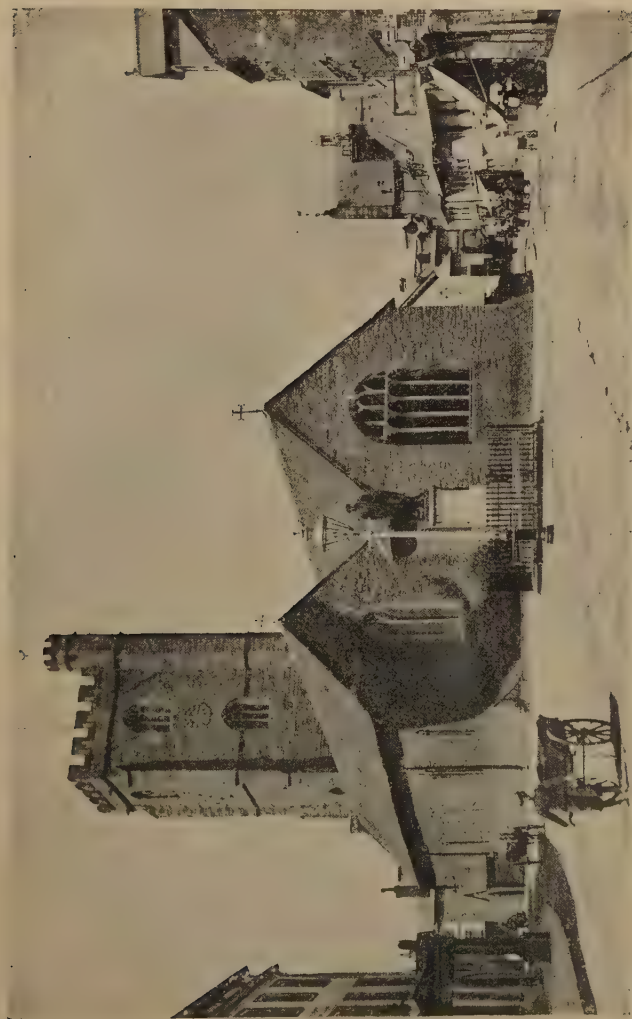
This quaint and quiet town, a true type of a clean, rural capital, is situated in Latitude 52 degrees North and Longitude 3 degrees West. It lies in a long valley well shaded by mountains and hills, the soil being of the old red sand-

stone, which runs round the northern outcrop of the South Wales coal-measures. Its population is about six thousand, and its elevation above the sea-level is about six hundred feet.

Brecon is beautiful from every point, and although one of the smallest of our county towns, it is still one of the most charming. The quaint aspect of the place, with its grim and winding streets has not suffered much change, even in these modern days of improvements. The heights around, add much beauty to the town, and the district is full of historical remains, which tell the story of the conflicts and wars of early times. On the north-east, overlooking the town, is a hill called Slwch Tump, while the view from the other heights shows rich lands and majestic mountains.

Among these must be named the lofty Beacons, glittering with their sun-lit tops, or clothed with dismal storm clouds, or robed in their white dress of snow, towering like giants in the distance. The town was built in the year 1092 by the Conqueror of Breconshire, Bernard Newmarch, who, it is said, did not like the situation of the older town three miles up the river Usk. He, therefore, demolished that, and brought down the materials to be used in the building of the new town. Like all important towns in those days, it was surrounded by walls, in which were four entrances, shown by the names: Struet Gate, Watton Gate, Water Gate, and Bridge Gate.

The wall started at the castle, and then enclosed the town in the form of an oval, measuring about 1,066 yards. On the inner side of the wall was a raised terrace, while on the outer side ran a deep foss, or ditch, so that with the Usk, Honddu, and the foss, Brecon was surrounded by water. Ten towers, or turrets, stood on the wall, with port holes, through which the soldiers inside could fire on the enemy.



BRECON—THE BULWARK.

There is a British encampment to be seen at Fenni Wood about two and a half miles from the town. Pen-y-Crug (cairn), or The Crug, about a mile away (past the Castle Hotel), marks the spot where Robert Fitzhamon and his Norman knights, coming from Hirwain, lay encamped before the great battle with Rhys ap Tewdwr—a battle which sounded the death-knell of Cambrian liberty in the county.

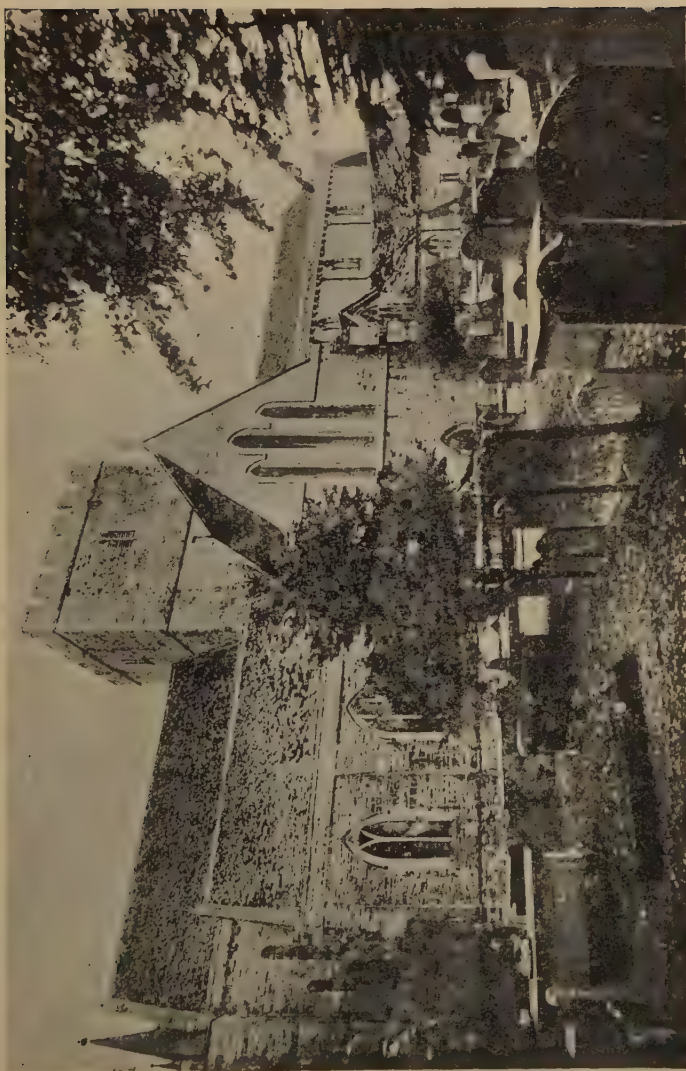
Brecon is spoken of as a borough in the time of Henry III. In 1217 Prince Llewelyn laid siege to the town, and the people paid him 100 marks to withdraw. In 1232 he again appeared, and burnt down much of the place and carried away much booty. The first charter was granted by De Bohun, together with the privilege of holding a fair for sixteen days in November every year.

In those days the Bailiff (or Mayor), assisted by twenty four of the "common people," managed the business of the borough. The first Bailiff was Mr. Philip Havard, 1556, and the first Mayor of the town was Mr. Edward Jones, of Buckland, 1685. The first Member of Parliament for the county and borough, in 1541, was Edward Games, Esq., of Newton.

On the 26th July, 1802, England's greatest admiral, Lord Nelson, visited the town, to the great delight of the people, who gave him a "royal welcome." One of the townsmen addressed to him these lines:—

" Hail, warrior ! wounded in thy country's cause !
I sing while sorrow tempers my applause !
While with the kindling crowd my hat I wave
With cordial zeal to celebrate the brave !
To greet the fair-famed hero of the Nile."

The gallant Admiral wrote from Milford Haven a letter thanking the town for its flattering reception to him.



THE PRIORY CHURCH, BRECON.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE PRIORY CHURCH, BRECON.

On a hill, above the town of Brecon, stands the finest Parish Church in Wales, a church dedicated to St. John the Evangelist. It is also called the Priory Church, from its being attached to the Benedictine Priory, adjoining it, which was founded by Bernard Newmarch as a cell of Battle Abbey, in Sussex, when, on capturing this county from the Welsh, he built the castle and town of Brecon.

Entering the churchyard from the west, we pass through the beautiful modern Lych Gate, from which a very fine view of the exterior of the church is obtained. St. John's is as much a fortress as a Church. The plain walls, the height of the windows, the embattled parapets, the strong tower—"four-square to all the winds that blow"—give it a military appearance. During the whole time the church was being built, there was need for such a fortress.

The present building is the third on this site; the first was taken down to make way for Bernard Newmarch's Norman Church, and has left no trace behind, though it was even then the parish church. The only remains of the second church are the font and some of the walls. The present church was begun in the 13th century. The Nave was built in the 14th century. The font is a remarkable relic of the earlier Norman Church.

The Nave is thus described by Baldwin :—" Its general appearance is grand, harmonious and spacious." The whole of the building East of the Nave formed the Monks' Church, the nave and its aisles were used as the Parish Church. The stone of which the church is built is old red sand-stone of a beautiful colour from a quarry in the neighbouring Priory Groves. The history of the building is written on its walls in a remarkable manner, so that those who look may read it for themselves.

The massive tower, with its great arches, forms one of the most impressive features of the building. There are six bells above, and the ringers' floor looks more like a keep than a church tower.

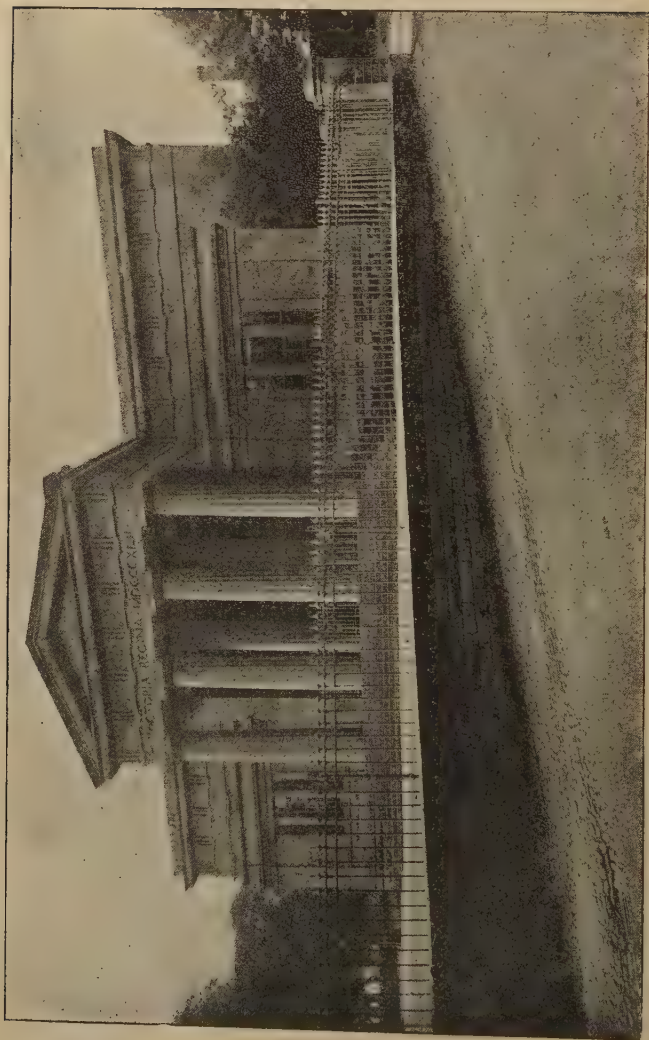
The North Transept, or Battle Church, was used in early days as the burial place of the inhabitants of the hamlet of Battle, named after the celebrated abbey in Sussex. The glory of the church, however, is the chancel, and although the outside appearance is stern and grim, the interior has a loveliness of its own.

The east window is filled with stained glass to the memory of the officers and men of the South Wales Borderers (24th Regiment), of whom twenty-one officers and five hundred and ninety men were killed in action in defence of Rorke's Drift, 1879. Brass tablets are also seen on the north wall, commemorating, amongst others, some V.C. heroes in the regiment.

Roods, or screens, divided the interior of the sacred building into portions, called "chapels."

THE CASTLE

The ruins of the old Brecon Castle are to be seen near the Hotel. At one time the Castle was the Law Courts of the county, and afterwards a jail until 1690. The walls now



THE SHIRE HALL, BRECON.

remaining show that the original Castle was very strongly built. In shape it was an oblong, measuring one hundred yards by eighty, and the River Honddu washed its walls.

The present castle ruins consist of the keep, or Ely Tower (where the Bishop of Ely was prisoner) and also another tower, the view from which is very fine. In order to prevent a siege in a time of trouble, the inhabitants, in the Civil War of 1645, destroyed the walls of the town.

THE ROMAN CAMP NEAR BRECON.

This famous and well-preserved camp was erected close to the spot where the ancient British fortress stood before it, in Fenni Wood, about two miles north-west of the town.

It covered the whole of a large field about twenty acres in extent, and traces of the boundary walls may now be seen. The fort was in the form of an oblong six hundred and twenty four feet by four hundred and twenty six, the whole being surrounded by a wall from three to six feet in height. Like other forts of its kind, the walls are about seven and a half feet thick. The whole area is now covered with fragments of bricks, more or less sunk into the ground, and several Roman coins of the Emperors Nero and Trajan have been found on the spot.

Here the Roman legions, about 54 A.D., entrenched and fortified themselves when they were conquering the native Silures of Garthmadryn. The importance of this station is seen from the fact, that the Julia Strata from Carmarthen, and the Sarn Helen from Neath, as well as the Roman road from Cardiff and Abergavenny, met here. About one thousand soldiers were stationed in it.

Passing from the Roman times to about the year 1094, we find the Normans at this historic spot, headed by Robert Fitz-

hamon, the conqueror of Glamorgan. With the help of three native traitor-princes, he slew in battle the hero Rhys ap Tewdwr, Prince of South Wales. The final struggle by Bleddyn ab Maenarch for the freedom of Brecknock, was also made on this hallowed ground—wet with the blood of so many brave sons of Gwalia.

THE TRADE GUILDS OF BRECON.

These guilds of Brecon town were very important bodies of the people in the business and religious life of the town. Persons skilled in certain trades or crafts, such as mercers, glovers, shoemakers, &c., were induced to settle in the town, and received special advantages from the Bailiff and Aldermen, as well as from the Baron Lord of the district. No person would be allowed to carry on any of these trades, without the consent of the guild. The result was, that those in trade became very wealthy, the shop, as a rule, bringing with it an "estate." The grandfather of the Hon. Sir William Lewis, of Llangorse, Bart., was a mercer of this town.

The "Lord Marcher" had his garrison and followers, and in order to secure food and raiment for them, he took under his charge the "trades" of the neighbourhood.

The mercers, weavers, &c., formed distinct classes, and were looked upon as superior to the common people. The managers and owners of the "trades" were rich, while the workmen who laboured for the guilds were poor enough.

These guilds had their respective chapels in St. John's and St. Mary's, that is, screens, or partitions, divided off certain portions of the church for each guild. Crosses and trade emblems were also marks of these societies—as shown on the tombstones over the graves of their members.

The Duke of Wellington monument, which stands in the middle of the town, on the Bulwark, was given to the town by John Evan Thomas, and is considered a masterpiece of the genius of this eminent man. This bronze statue of the great Duke was modelled from life, and is a fine work of art.

CHAPTER XLII

CHRIST COLLEGE.

The College of Christ, now famous for its public school, is situated just beyond the bridge over the Usk from the town of Brecon. The story of its origin is a long and varied one. The present buildings, after centuries of alterations, form a stately pile, especially the chapel. The surroundings and grounds also are very attractive, for there are twenty acres of land attached to the College. It stands about four hundred



CHRIST COLLEGE, BRECON.

feet above the sea-level, in the pure air of the Brecknock Beacons, and is an admirable site for a public school. It has a record of which it may well feel proud, and continues to do valuable work in preparing pupils for the professions and older Universities.

At an early time there were here a monastery (of the Black Friars) and a church. It is not known by whom the monastery was founded. Richard David, the last

prior, gave it to Henry VIII., who transferred the College at Abergwili to Brecon, with all the ministers, priests, &c. This King founded by Royal Charter the College of Christ, Brecknock. During the Civil War, in the time of Charles I., the Puritans seized it, carried away its plate, ornaments and nearly pulled down the building.

In 1660, at the Restoration, the church was restored, and was completed as it now stands. Inside there are many very old figures in marble and stone dating from early times.

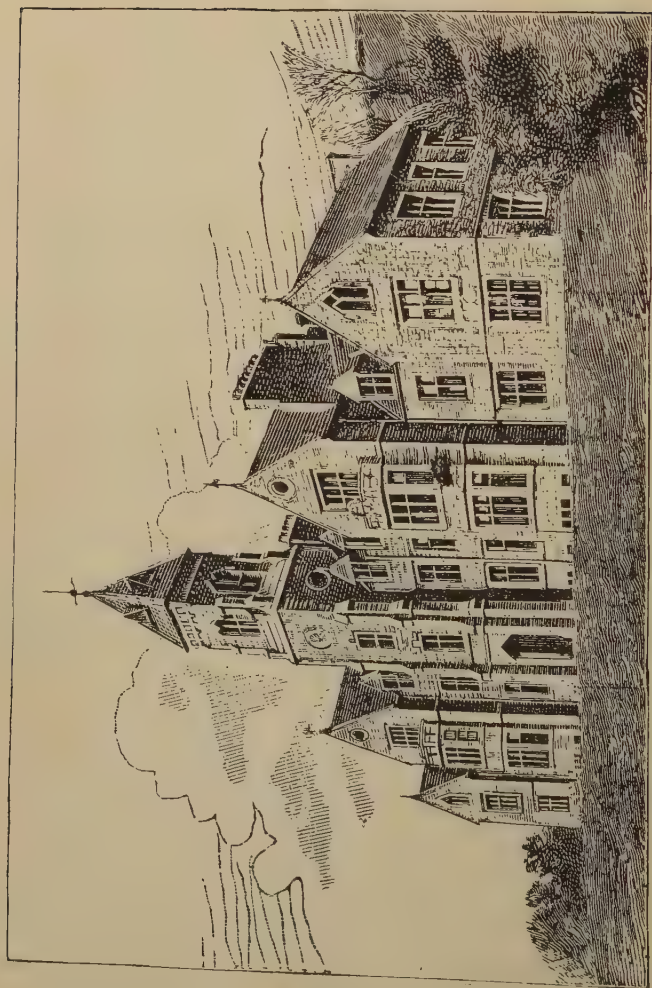
There is a tablet to the memory of Theophilus Jones, the historian of Breconshire. "This marble but records his name, the history of this, his loved, his native county, will long survive and be his monument."

The cost of rebuilding the school was £10,000, and is now governed by the scheme obtained in 1880. Many eminent men have been educated here.

The late Dr. Lloyd, Bishop of Bangor, was once a headmaster of this most distinguished school.

THE MEMORIAL COLLEGE.

This stately building of Gothic design is in Camden Road, just outside the town, and commands a fine view of the Vale of the Usk. In front of the building is a broad terrace with well-laid grounds covering four and a half acres. There is a centre building with a tower and spire of imposing appearance, one hundred feet high. On either side are the wings of the building, while at each end are the residences of some of the staff. The whole is a striking figure in the landscape. The length in front is one hundred and fifty four feet, and its breadth from front to back is about one hundred feet; the whole cost about £12,000 to build.



MEMORIAL COLLEGE, BRECON.

It was built by the Congregational body for the purpose of training young men for the work of preaching the Gospel. The name "Memorial College" was given to it in order to connect its existence with the great event of 1662, when about two thousand occupants of livings were ejected from the Church of England, and were afterwards known as Non-conformists.

The College was opened on September the fifteenth and sixteenth, 1869. Until then, the College was situated in the large building now known as the Oddfellow's Hall, in St. Mary's Street, Brecon. There were at first two colleges, which were joined and established as one institution at Carmarthen. Some differences, however, arose with regard to religious doctrine, and a College was opened at Abergavenny by one of the parties. After changing its home several times, the College has found a home in Brecon, where it is likely to remain for the rest of its days. The students receive their secular education in Cardiff University College, and take the course in Theology in Brecon.

The opening services were attended by two notable men among others, the Rev. Thomas Binney, D.D., one of the fathers of Nonconformity, and the Rev. David Williams, Troedrhiwdalar, the veteran Patriarch of Wales—then in his 91st year. On the previous Sunday the latter had ridden on horseback twenty-four miles and preached three times. It was humorously said at the meetings that Williams was in the ministry when Dr. Binney was playing marbles in the streets of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Among the eminent men who have served on the staff of the College may be mentioned Rev. J. Morris, D.D., Rev. D. Rowlands, B.A., Rev. W. Oliver, M.A., Rev. H. Griffiths,

M.A. (father of Principal Griffiths, of the University College, Cardiff), and Rev. W. Roberts, M.A.

THE RAILWAYS.

The first railway running into the town was the Brecon & Merthyr Railway, which was opened for traffic May 1, 1863, and has a total length of sixty-one miles. It runs to Newport, with branches to Dowlais, Merthyr, and Rhymney.

The Mid-Wales, now the Cambrian, which was opened September 1st, 1864, runs from Brecon to Llanidloes, a distance of forty eight and a half miles. At Talyllyn it forms a junction with the Brecon and Merthyr, and at Three Cocks with the Midland, which now owns the line between Hereford and Brecon.

The Neath & Brecon was opened June 2nd, 1869, and travels a distance of fifty six miles. The Midland Company have leased the main line from Brecon to Swansea.

INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The Shire Hall was opened in 1842. It is a handsome stone building, and cost twelve thousand pounds to build. Here are the public offices in connection with the business of the county, and here also the Assizes are held.

THE BARRACKS.

Brecon is now a military centre, and, under the new scheme, it is the depôt of the Territorial Regiment, entitled the South Wales Borderers, known to fame as the "gallant 24th," which was cut to pieces in the battles of the Zulu War.

THE COUNTY JAIL.

This grim building stands on the south bank of the Tarrell, and was completed in 1782. It was erected at a cost of nine thousand pounds. For many years an old building in

the Struet was used as the County Jail, and in 1690 a prison was built in the Watton. The Brecon Theatre used to stand on this site.

The old prison was a wretched building, and the jailer, out of a salary of £31 10s. a year, had to supply most of the prisoners with food, so that the poor fellows were almost starved to death.

A second prison was built in 1782, on the side of the present one. At this time the male wing was rebuilt, and contained accommodation for fifty two males; there were forty cells so constructed as to contain three prisoners each. The new prison contains a chapel, and a new wing for the female prisoners, and is now known as H.M. Prison.

THE BRECON AND ABERGAVENNY CANAL.

In the year 1793, over fifty years before the first railway was opened, an Act was passed for making a navigable canal from the town of Brecknock to the Monmouthshire Canal, near to the town of Pontypool, and for making and maintaining railways and stone roads from such canal to several ironworks and mines in these counties. The cutting of the first sod was in 1796, and on the 24th December, 1800, the first boat-load was brought to Brecon from Gellifelen Colliery, in Llanelly. The total cost was £150,000. The canal was completed in 1804, and was connected with the Monmouthshire Canal, 1811, the barges being able to carry twenty five tons each.

Since the Llanelly Ironworks were closed, and the Merthyr & Brecon Railway was opened, the canal traffic has very much lessened. Lime and timber, and other building materials, are still carried to some extent, and here and there wharves are seen close to the villages on the way.

In place of coal-barges, pleasure-boats are seen gliding along this placid and charming waterway; for in summer, parties visit the Vale of Crickhowell, or Talybont, and Brecon, and often treat themselves to a trip on the canal. It would be difficult to describe the sylvan beauty and charming landscape within our view, from a boat on this delightful waterway.

If industrial traffic has decayed, pleasure and gaiety have found here a rare spot for their home.

The distance from Abergavenny to Brecon is twenty miles.

CHAPTER XLIII.

EMINENT MEN OF THE COUNTY TOWN.

The county town can be proud of the array of talented men who distinguished themselves in different spheres of public life. Among others, the following are natives, or were residents, of the town of Brecknock :— William Churchey, a poet; Dr. Thomas Coke, LL.D.; Richard Hall, a poet; Frances Elizabeth Hoggan, M.D.; Thomas Prestwood Lucas, M.D.; Dr. Hugh Price, LL.D.; Sir John Price, LL.D.; Mrs. Siddons; John Evan Thomas, F.S.A.; William Meredith Thomas; James Williams, M.D.; the Ven. Archdeacon Bevan, M.A.; Rev. T. Price, M.A., PH.D.; Dr. John D. Rhys.

DR. THOMAS COKE, LL.D.

Happy is the lot of the child whose young days are spent in the midst of scenes in and around the beautiful county town of Brecon. The riverside, and meadows, and groves seem full of secret beauty and charm to the budding nature of a child. The rippling of the waters and the song of the birds find an echo in the mind and heart of youth. In the Priory groves on a summer's day, might be seen a dark-haired and bright-looking boy of fifteen, wandering along, book in hand, thoughtful yet happy—Thomas Coke, in after life to become the learned and great Dr. Thomas Coke, LL.D.—of whom his native town can well be proud.

His father, Bartholomew, was well known as a clever apothecary, and was greatly esteemed in and around Brecon.

Thomas was the youngest, and only child now living, for his two brothers—Bartholemew and John—had passed through life, and found an early grave. Providence seemed to have for Thomas some important work to do, and he was spared. He was born on the 9th October, 1747, and showed early signs of natural ability for books and study.

Until he was fifteen years old he attended Christ College, Brecon, where the foundation of a sound education was laid, and his parents, finding him so “quick at learning,” sent him in his sixteenth year as a gentleman commoner to Jesus College, Oxford. Thomas here met with companions, who seem to have won him entirely, to their own base and evil habits. It is the story of many a clever youth, on leaving home for the new life of a University; where often meet together a number of wild and thoughtless youths, yielding to the temptations of wealth and luxury. They often go on their mad career, and can never regain the old paths.

Thomas Coke, although brilliant as a student, found himself fast drifting on the downward course, and had already commenced to deny even the existence of God. But he was arrested—some unseen power had gripped him. There was no peace of mind for him. He began to reflect on his past sinful ways, and yielded to the better counsels of his higher nature, and the call of God. He sought for pardon, and became a changed man—never again to return to the old ways, for he felt himself destined for great and noble things. When he left the University, having taken his B.A. degree in 1768, he came home to his parents a fine, noble, young fellow.

His excellent education, his natural talents, and his ample fortune, together with his popular manners, made him a general favourite. Soon he was elected Mayor of his native

town, and the following three years were spent in useful work among his friends at home. The University further honoured him with the degree of M.A., and next we find him a curate in the Parish of Road, Somersetshire. Now he became a very earnest and popular preacher. The Gospel truths burned deeply into his heart; he had a burning zeal for saving souls—in fact, he had now become an evangelist.

In some way or other, he was misunderstood by the parishioners, and he left the Church, having been dismissed at a moment's notice.

However, he decided to offer his services to the Rev. John Wesley, and in his thirtieth year he entered the Wesleyan ministry. Now he often preached in the open air to thousands of listeners, but it was not always pleasant for him. In London one day, while preaching thus, the hose of the fire engine was turned upon preacher and people; but his reply—that soon they would want their water for some other purpose—was realized, for a fortnight later a fire broke out which destroyed nearly all the houses in that square.

Dr. Coke had now become eminent in his denomination, and in 1782 he went over to Ireland, where his great ability won for him much fame.

Important work called upon him to visit America, and in November, 1784, he arrived in New York, where he, by his preaching and labours, did good work for the Methodists on that Continent. He was now a *Bishop* of his own Church. Cokesbury College was opened by him for the education of the young, and as the struggle on behalf of the freedom of slaves was going on, he threw himself heartily into the fight. He consulted General Washington on the matter, and did noble work in that good cause.

In June, 1785, Dr. Coke returned to England, but his

voyage was a memorable one. A fearful storm arose, and the ship, driven out of her course, anchored in the West Indies, on the Island of Antigua. Here, however, he and his friends were well treated by the people, and on one occasion they were invited by a company of merchants to dine with Prince William Henry, afterwards William IV. of England.

In a few months he set sail again for America, and reached Charlestown, February 10th. He was a true missionary—born for the work—and with Bishop Asbury he rode three hundred miles in one week; preaching every other day. He now could not rest, but burned with holy zeal for spreading the Gospel and founding churches. Even the Doctor collected from door to door towards this good work, and during his life, he in various ways, collected thousands of pounds.

“The Doctor is too warm,” said Wesley, when he listened to him preaching; “but the missionary fires never burned brighter than when they were fed by Coke!”

The West Indies and America received much attention from him, finding as he did, that the soul of the heathen was thirsting for the knowledge of the living God. On his third voyage out of the former country, he settled ten missionary places.

On several occasions he narrowly escaped capture and death; and on its seventh voyage to America, his ship was captured by a French vessel, and the Doctor became a prisoner of war. After some difficulty he was set free, but nothing daunted, he continued the same work in the Continent of America.

Nor did he forget his duty to Wales, his native land, for he set on foot a Welsh mission, which was a remarkable suc-

cess. In the midst of this great enterprise, he found time to write a valuable commentary on the Bible. He also first established Sunday Schools in Cornwall. The Wesleyan Methodists honoured him, in appointing him to the President's chair on more than one occasion.

The Gospel was sent by him even to the prisoners in our jails. His life was one constant sacrifice for the Gospel of Christ.

The mission work, which has spread over so much of Africa, was established by him. His last voyage, to Ceylon, with a band of Gospel Missioners, was in December, 1813. He devoted his own services and had undertaken to find £6,000 towards the great and noble effort, which, however, he never lived to carry out. The "Cabalva," the missionary ship, sailed under the escort of a British man-of-war.

On May 2nd the Doctor retired to his cabin, and complained of illness. "I shall be better to-morrow," he replied to one of his friends sitting in his cabin. Before the morning, however, this noble and brave worker had gone to his well-earned rest, and on that evening, the faithful band of servants held a solemn funeral service, and with sad hearts committed his body to an ocean grave.

The word "great" was never more deserved by any man than by this talented, noble man of God.

His memory is honoured by a tablet in the Wesleyan Chapel in Brecon, while another more lasting tribute to his memory remains as Dr. Coke's Memorial School, also in his native town.

His love to the Saviour was so intense that difficulties and dangers, and death itself, were no terrors to him, and no one better earned the Master's "Well done!" than the eminent Dr. Thomas Coke.

SIR JOHN PRICE, LL.D.

The honour of having given us the first book printed in the Welsh language, belongs to this eminent townsman. The condition of our country in his day was a truly sad one, as shown in the base habits and ignorance of the people; and it is to the lasting fame of this good man, that in the year 1546 he published in Welsh a translation of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed. Although this appears to us perhaps a small thing, still, in those days, it was of invaluable service, not only in itself, but as an example for others to give to the people in their own language the Word of God.

John Price was born in Breconshire, but the date of his birth is uncertain. He was descended from one of the oldest families in the county. His father was Rhys ab Gwilym Gwyn, who claimed to be in the line of the famous county warriors Einon Sais (Einon the Saxon) and Dafydd Gam. His wife also was nearly related to Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex. He received the best education of the day, and was encouraged in his studies by William Earl of Pembroke. In his young days he showed signs of great natural ability, and while at Pembroke College, Oxford, he gained the highest title—Doctor of Laws—of that University. His high family connections easily opened the door for him to the eminent men of the day, and even to the Royal Court, where he was a favourite.

The name of Sir John Price will always be prominent in the history of Wales, for he, more than anyone else, was the means of bringing about the Union of England and Wales in the year 1535. His knowledge of the law was so extensive, that Henry VIII. entrusted to him, the task of drawing out

the report on the relation of England and Wales, as regards their laws, and of framing the new agreement which henceforth was to make these two countries one.

The King also appointed him on the Council, to carry out the dissolution of the monasteries, and in this county the work was done entirely by Sir John Price himself. He was also an eminent antiquary and wrote books on history, and a description of Wales, as well as several books in Latin. The date of his death is given as 1573.

HUGH PRICE, LL.D.

The name of this learned man is chiefly connected with Jesus College, Oxford, where, on its gates, was to be seen an inscription in Latin stating that he founded the college, and was a native of the town of Brecon. Before his time, natives of Wales found much difficulty in entering the Colleges at Oxford, but Dr. Hugh Price brought within reach of his countrymen, the benefits of this famous University, and in this way conferred upon them a boon, which will always reflect honour on his memory.

After he took his degree, in 1525, he was made Prebendary of Rochester, and treasurer of St. David's. He spent £1,500 in building Jesus College, and afterwards endowed it, with lands in Breconshire to the value of one hundred and sixty pounds. His native town honoured him by making him Bailiff in the year 1572. His father was a member of the Corporation at that time, and carried on the business of a butcher, by which he became very wealthy. He was known as "Rhys ab Rhys the Butcher."

Dr. Hugh Price died in 1574, and was buried in the Priory Church.

JOHN EVAN THOMAS, F.S.A.

It is often a puzzle to parents to decide, what craft or profession is best suited for their boys. This trouble arises from the fact, that the child does not show early signs of *liking* for a certain course in life. John Thomas, and Jane his wife, however, found no difficulty in deciding what to do with their eldest son John Evan, for this remarkable lad showed plainly wonderful taste and love for carving in stone and modelling



WELLINGTON STATUE, BRECON.

in clay. While other boys would be playing, John Evan found his play in making models of fruits, flowers, or anything, that came under his notice. At the age of fourteen his models were work of art, and are preserved to-day in the county, as clear signs of genius—natural and untaught.

His father soon noticed this, and decided that John was to be a sculptor, and he spared no money in giving his talented son the best education for the purpose. Not only had John a natural gift for drawing, carving, &c., but he was a bright, clever lad in all the school work. After a splendid education in his youth, John was sent to London to study under the famous sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey, and then for some years completed his training under some of the most eminent sculptors on the Continent.

He now returned to London, and in 1834 commenced his famous career as a sculptor, and very soon took a place in the front rank of his profession. His works were shown in the Royal Academy, and they attracted so great attention, that he received the patronage of the Queen. Having studied the masters of his art, he had, without effort, attained a fame almost equal to theirs.

His portraits and busts were *real* pictures of the persons they represented. He could give the touch and finish so as to make them living and almost speaking. His opinion on all forms of art was highly valued, and his services were demanded by some of the foremost men of the day. Wherever he went, his refined manners and genial conversation won for him, the admiration of the company. Thus he was honoured as a guest in the highest society of London.

This brilliant fame, however, did not make him despise the old folk of his native town; neither was he ashamed of his native language—Y Gymraeg—for whenever he could get away from his London friends, John enjoyed visiting the quaint old town of Brecon, and meeting the many friends of his youth. He spoke Welsh, and always took a loving and patriotic interest in his native county and town. And, as a mark of his attachment, he presented to the town the admirable Duke of Wellington statue on the Bulwark. It is in bronze

and stands eight feet high, and has panels representing General Picton charging the French Cavalry at Waterloo, and other historical events of the Peninsular War. The railing was put up by voluntary contributions. The great Duke of Wellington honoured the artist with several sittings, while he was engaged upon this work.

Throughout Wales, his work can be seen. Among his famous statues may be mentioned, a marble statue of the Prince of Wales when a boy, the Prince Consort being present at the special sittings given to the artist; Lord Londonderry's statue in Westminster Abbey; the Welsh memorial to the late Prince Consort on the castle heights at Tenby; and a prominent one in the Exhibition of the year 1851—a fine work of art, called "Science unveiling Ignorance." The Priory Church at Brecon contains many beautiful figures—the work of the town's illustrious artist.

At the Abergavenny Eisteddfod, in October, 1848, the prize of seventy guineas was won by him for the best model showing British events.

His best work, perhaps, is in the Welshpool Museum, a bronze group, showing Tewdrig, King of Gwent and Morgawg, comforted by his daughter, in his dying moments. Its cost was said to be two hundred guineas. Busts of eminent county men are of his design, too numerous to mention.

In the glare of wealth and fame he did not forget his native town, for, with the help of the late Lord Llanover, he revived the funds of the famous public school, Christ College. Neither was the town unmindful of their duty to him, for in 1862 he was appointed J.P. and D.L. of the county, and a few years later he served in the office of High Sheriff.

In 1840 John Evan Thomas married Mary Gunter, one of the descendants of Sir Peter Gunter, in this county.

His personal appearance was most charming. He is thus described : " A fine, open, ruddy countenance, with large light-blue eyes, full of intelligence; a broad brow, and a mass of thick, curly, golden hair, which required no hand to arrange."

He died October 9, 1873, aged 64 years, and was buried in Brompton Cemetery.

By his beautiful life, his patriotic love, and his genius, he has added to the glory of Welshmen, the Welsh language and his native county.

CHAPTER XLIV.

WILLIAM MEREDITH THOMAS.

The brother of the eminent sculptor (John Evan Thomas) was born July 13, 1819. William also showed signs of great talent as a sculptor, and for 30 years worked with his brother, but, in a sense, he remained in the shadow. If he had taken a separate course for himself, his fame would have risen and spread to a much greater degree than it did. William seems to have taken to poetry and literature, and it is said that his friends delighted to listen to him repeating from memory the beauties of Shakespeare, Byron, and other great authors.

He died suddenly September 7, 1877, and lies buried in Brompton Cemetery:

SARAH SIDDONS.

Among the names of the famous actresses of this country that of Mrs. Siddons takes a place in the front rank. Indeed, for some years she was the "Queen of Tragedy," and her appearance in any theatre in London or Scotland attracted thousands of people, who were ready to pay any price to see the renowned "Queen." For thirty years she swayed the people as no other actress has ever done. The effect she produced upon the audience at times was beyond description. Men sobbed, women were overpowered by their feelings—the "house" shook with excitement.

The majesty and terror of her appearance, the tenderness and woe she displayed were such, that the people were frozen into terror as she willed; weeping when she wept; smiling when she smiled. Her own



MRS. SIDDONS.

intense feelings, were repeated in every heart present. Every famous painter painted her; poets sang her praises; critics wrote their admiration of her; and English Society described her as England's ornament. A very eminent writer to a London paper says of Mrs. Siddons :

“ The stage has never seen her equal, and will probably never see another so completely formed to command all its influences. I never saw so sad a face combined with so much beauty. Her voice, though grand, was sad, her air sad, her very smile sad; but there was such variety in her movement and looks, she so deeply awoke the feelings, so awfully moved the mind, that she ruled the stage and swayed the people like the storm the reeds. Her masterpiece was doubtless the ‘ Wife of Macbeth.’ She entered with Macbeth’s letter in hand, her step was hurried, as if she had just glanced over the letter, then she read on in a firm, calm voice, when her whole frame seemed disturbed; she drew her fine eyes upwards and exclaimed ‘ Vanished ! ’ with a wild force which showed that the whole force of the temptation had stuck into the soul.

“ Then her sleep-walking scene—nothing so mystic, nothing so awful, was ever seen upon the stage. It was too awful ! She more resembled a ghost rising from the tomb than a living woman. Her last appearance was in 1817, for the benefit of her brother Charles.”

The above account of the great actress, appears all the more remarkable, when we come to consider her early life and family history. Her parents, Roger Kemble and his wife, were roving players, and were often seen travelling on the road with a big van, which carried all the needful things for a performance, as well as the articles and clothing of themselves and children. This was the lot of Sarah during her childhood. She remembered going from village to village,

putting up in a barn, or other shed, for a performance, and sometimes being hooted by people who looked upon "Actors and Acting" as a work of the devil.

This uncertain occupation, brought to the family a mean and scanty comfort, and Sarah, at a very early age, had to take part in most of these entertainments. At the age of thirteen she was in Worcester, singing and acting in a barn. Sarah's education must have suffered under such conditions as these, although her mother sent her to the nearest school, wherever they happened to be. Her face was strikingly beautiful, and always made a good impression during her appearance on the stage in her young days.

During a London season, she seemed to have taken part in some plays quite unsuited to her taste. These were comedy plays, to which she was not adapted. After some time she left Drury Lane, London, where she was not required. Afterwards, she was engaged in Bath, at three pounds per week. The struggle for daily bread for herself and children, had been a hard one, but at last success had come, and Sarah Siddons for four years reigned supreme on the "boards."

Now she was again engaged for Drury Lane, and the trial was a great burden and anxiety on the mother, who had to provide for the family. Although she might have been a duchess, she chose to accept the hand of the handsome Henry Siddons—a poor player in her father's troupe. Her parents very much objected to her choice, but to no purpose; and now she was the bread-winner of the family. For many years her fame never abated—she stood in the brilliant glare of her country's admiration.

The burden of sixty-four years, however, pressed her into the shadow of life, which continued to darken for twelve more years, until on June 8th, 1831, at the age of seventy-six

years, Sarah Siddons passed away at a house in Upper Baker Street, London. Her husband had died in 1808, and of her five children two only survived her. It is said that at her funeral in Paddington Churchyard five thousand persons were present. There is a memorial statue in Westminster Abbey. She was a deeply religious woman, as these beautiful verses, which she wrote will show :—

Say what's the brightest wreath of fame
But canker'd buds that opening close;
Ah! what the world's most pleasing dreams
But broken fragments of repose.

Lead me where peace with steady hand
The mingled cup of life shall hold;
Where time shall smoothly pour his sand,
And wisdom turn that sand to gold.

Then happy at religion's shrine
This weary heart its load shall lay,
Each wish my fatal love resign
And passion melt in tears away.

CHAPTER XLV.

LLANDDEW.

The village and church of this name, are about a mile and threequarters from Brecon, the church being, perhaps, next to the old Priory, the oldest in the county. Close by the church, are the ruins of the palace of the renowned Giraldus Cambrensis. The names of several farms in the district are connected with some noted men, who held lands and important positions in the county.

The name of one is Troed-yr-harn, or Tref Treharne—the home of Treharne, a Welshman, the Lord of Llangorse. He was a wealthy and powerful lord in the district, and his mansion stood on this spot. He was the victim of the cruel and crafty Wm. de Breos, the Norman, his superior lord. Having been invited to Brecon by the Norman to arrange some business matters, he was met on the road by De Breos, who had with him, some bloodhounds. These were ordered to attack the innocent Welshmen, and, after being seized by them, he was tied to a horse's tail and dragged cruelly through the streets of Brecon, and at last his body was hung from a gallows for three days.

Close to another farm, Court Llanddew by name, there is a slight rising ground, where the Standard of Henry VIII. was placed when some of his troops marched from Milford Haven to Shrewsbury.

About a quarter of a mile from this spot, there are three farms, named after the Poytins, a Norman baron, who came over with William the Conqueror, and had a large gift of lands. These are known as Peytin Du—Gwyn—Glas (Black

Peytin—White Peytin—Green Peytin). These were bought by Llewelyn, the father of Sir Dafydd Gam, who lived for some time, when young, in Peytin Gwyn.

MERTHYR CYNOG: ST. CYNOG THE MARTYR.

This parish, like so many other parishes in the county, takes its name from one of the Christian martyrs, who lived and suffered here. About one-half of its surface is mountain, the slopes and off-shoots of the Epynt, which reach the boundary of Talgarth Hundred on the east, and that of Builth on the north.

The rest is the gradual slope on the left bank of the Usk. Two vales, those of the Honddu and Escir, cut the district from the north to the south, and along these there is little cultivated land. Beyond these, on each side, are fine stretches of woods, cornfields, and meadows.

One spot in the Vale of the Honddu is very marked and pretty, that around the peak of the Vanoleu Mountain, one side of which is in the form of a half circle of ground rising in steps. Following the course of the Honddu, it is said, an artist can get a fine picture for his canvas every hundred yards.

BATTLE.

The name " Battle " at once brings to our minds, the story of the conflicts, that must have raged in this district. It is the name of an old church, village, and parish. The parish lies to the north-west of the county town, and the church is about three miles away, on the road to Merthyr Cynog. Of all the spots yet spoken of, this is the most historical, for here the fate of Breconshire was settled, when it lost the dearest of all its treasures—the crown of liberty. Three

landmarks are given : a well, called Ffynon Pen Rhys (the well of Rhys the 'Chief), Heol-y-Cymry (The Welshmen's Road) and Maen Hir (long stone), which probably shows where some of the slain were buried.

In the village, the last native Prince of Brecknock fell fighting, sword in hand, with the Norman Bernard Newmarch.

GARTHBRENGY.

The river Honddu is about fifteen miles in length, and flows from the high lands of the Epynt through this and other parishes. The lands on each side are rich, and the view along the slopes of the hills is a beautiful picture of pasture, tillage, and wood. A feature of the district, however, is the rugged glens and the deep ravines in the course of the Honddu. At one time Garthbrenghy, if not, indeed, the whole of the county, was the property of the Gam family. It was given as a reward for Sir Dafydd's services to the king, and especially for the brave deed on the field of Agincourt, by which he saved the king's life. We, however, cannot altogether admire him, owing to his base trick at Machynlleth.

As Dafydd's principal residence was situated in this parish, we shall now speak more fully of this unfortunate Welshman, who played such an important part in the history of his native county.

CHAPTER XLVI.

SIR DAFYDD GAM.

Can'st thou a little red man descry?
 Looking around for his dwelling fair?
 Tell him it under the bank doth lie,
 And its brow the mark of a coal doth bear.

Owen Glyndwr, standing in front of the mansion of his enemy and would-be murderer, Dafydd Gam, turned to Gam's bailiff, also looking on, and addressed him in an *englyn* (stanza), of which the above is a translation. The hero of Wales now was Glyndwr, and it seemed as if indeed he would soon be King of Gwalia. He had called together his Parliament at Machynlleth in 1402—four men from each “cantrev,” or “cwmwd” (an old district division of Wales)—to consider his plans for the future. Among the Welshmen who attended, one came with a traitor's purpose—Dafydd Gam, a landowner near Brecon, in whose family were some famous warriors. His great-grandfather had fought at Crecy and Poitiers, in France, in 1346 and 1356, respectively.

“Cam,” in Welsh, means “crooked,” and the name seems to have been given to this man from a “squint,” or “cast,” in his eye. He was a native of Breconshire, whose ancestors appear to have been wealthy, and supporters of the Kings of England. The date of his birth cannot be decided; but he was about sixty years of age at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. His name in full was Dafydd ap Llewelyn ap Howel, otherwise known as Dafydd Gam, or “Squint-eyed David.” From his extensive lands and wealth, he is also known as the squire of Breconshire. In his veins, was Norman and Welsh blood, and we are glad to state this, for his cruel

nature and unpatriotic spirit, make every true Cymro regret, that one of their kinsmen should have been a traitor and a murderer.

Dafydd was a short, but very strong man, long-armed, with red hair, and a cast in his eye. His fiery temper and brutal spirit caused him to murder, in the streets of Brecon, his countryman, Richard, Lord of Slwch. For this, he had to escape out of the country, and he was received into the household of John of Gaunt, where Henry Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry IV., and he became fast friends. While he was here, it is probable, that these two met Owen Glyndwr, who at one time had been esquire to Bolingbroke, against whom he fought so long. When Sir Dafydd Gam was in Breconshire he held his lands under Henry IV., who was Earl of Hereford and Lord of Brecon; hence he became one of the "King's men."

He was one of the most daring men of the day, and like a lion in bravery, but in Owen Glyndwr he had his match.

The certain death to which Gam exposed himself, in his plot at Machynlleth, shows his fearless heart; and if this spirit were directed along honourable lines, he would be placed in the front rank of the heroes of our nation. The foul plot, however, failed. Gam got into the trap himself, he was seized, and doomed to the cruel fate which the nature of the crime deserved. His life would have been taken, only Owen's friends pleaded hard for the prisoner, and, instead of the gallows, he was kept in prison for ten years. This was perhaps a more severe torture to a man of his spirit than death.

The King, Henry IV., at last paid a heavy ransom for the liberty of his squire, and, upon promising to lay down all arms against Owen, Dafydd Gam was once more a free man.

But no sooner had he gained his liberty, than he began anew to join the king's men, in their attacks on Owen and his army wherever he met them. Finding this out, Owen, when he next visited Breconshire, made his way towards Peytin Gwyn—the home of his old prisoner—hoping thus to meet him and take his life. But finding him from home, he burnt down the mansion to the ground, and stood there until the place was a heap of cinders. The stanza at the beginning of this account was then recited by Glyndwr.

In the year 1415 we find Gam embarking with the King's army for France, to fight at the Battle of Agincourt. A blaze of glory bursts upon him for his gallant fighting and daring bravery on the battlefield; and Sir Walter Raleigh, in the glare of this glory, forgets his vices, for nothing but admiration seems to remain.

Gam and Sir Roger Vaughan, his son-in-law, were at the King's side in the thick of the fight. Gam saved the King's life at the loss of his own—in fact, both fell by the King's side on that memorable day.

He is said to have been knighted on the field while dying. When the King had sent him to survey the French hosts just before the battle, his reply was: "There are enough to kill, enough to take prisoners, and enough to run away."

Henry V. thus owed his life to Dafydd Gam, and we can be sure, he rewarded his family with something more valuable than the title of "Sir" to the dead hero's memory. He gave them extensive lands in the county, for, after this, Gam's descendants rose in wealth and importance.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE HUNDRED OF BUILTH.

This is the most northerly of all the Hundreds, and reaches southwards as far as the Epynt Mountains. The basin of the River Irfon occupies the southern part of the district from east to west. The north consists of the most dreary and desolate mountain regions in the county—especially around the village of Abergwesyn. The Epynt Mountains, with their off-shoots, extend the whole length of the southern boundary as far as Builth Road, on the borders of Radnorshire.

Standing on one of the peaks of the Epynt, just behind Cefn Brith, the birthplace of the Welsh martyr John Penry, and looking northwards, we command a good view of the general surface of the Hundred. Across the beautiful Vale of Irfon, we see the cluster of mountains beyond Llanwrtyd, with the lofty Drygarn, towering above the rest, in the extreme north-west; while around Beulah, and extending to the north-east towards Llanwrthwl, we see some of the best farms in the county, with beautiful valleys varying the scene.

The Hundred contains fifteen parishes, named as follows : Tir-yr-Abad, Llanwrtyd, Llanddewi Abergwesyn, Llanfihangel Abergwesyn, Llanwrthwl, Llanavan Vawr, Llanfihangel Bryn Pabuan, Llanganten, Llanfechan, Llangammarch, Llanynis, Maesmynis, Llanfair-yn-Muallt, Llangynog, and Alltmawr.

The chief towns or villages are Builth, Llanwrtyd, Llangammarch, Cefngorwydd, Garth, Beulah, Llanwrthwl, and Abergwesyn.

The population of the Hundred is about six thousand. The eastern boundary is formed by the river Wye.

TIR-YR-ABAD (THE ABBOT'S LAND).

This parish lies in the extreme west of the county, and borders Carmarthenshire. Rhys ap Gruffydd, Prince of South Wales, in 1164 founded the old monastery of Strata Florida, in Cardiganshire; and he gave the whole of this parish and other districts towards the support of the monastery. Several other names are given to the parish, such as New Church, Llanddulas, and Aberdulas.

A branch of the Roman road from Carmarthen to Chester, crossed this parish over the moorland common called Llwydlo Ffach. Some think, that Llwydlo is a Welsh form of the word Ludlow, and that here used to be held a court of justice, under the president and council of the Marches. Ludlow was famous for its court of justice, and hence the name given to this common and the house where these meetings were held. It is very likely that the disputes arising from the border people were settled here.

There was an old public-house built on the borders of the two counties, so that two men entering together, and turning one into the right and the other into the left room would sit in different counties while in the same house. In later times the magistrates of the two counties met here to decide the troubles of the borderers.

The surface of the whole parish is mostly moors and bogs, with very few farms of value.

LLANWRTYD.

Llan-wrth-y-rhyd (The Church by the ford). Most of the surface of the parish consists of mountains, hills, and valleys, and its chief interest is the village of Llanwrtyd, so well known for its mineral springs as to be called "The Matlock of Wales."



LLANWRTYD WELLS.

The village, about twelve miles due west from Builth Wells, lies in a dingle between two high hills, on the banks of the River Irfon. It is about six hundred and sixty feet above the sea-level, and the height of the surrounding mountains will account for the high rainfall which, on an average, is sixty-six inches. Passing through the village from the railway station, we notice that it is divided by the river into two parts, joined by a bridge. Just beyond the village up the valley, there are now two fine Pump-houses on opposite sides of the Irfon : that on the right bank being called the Victoria Well. The Dolcoed Well and grounds are on the left bank.

Taking a walk up the valley past these wells, we are shut in by very high hills, that on our left, Pen-Dinas, being very marked owing to its rounded top and being covered with tall trees. The road passes the old church, and leads on winding past the base of the hills, on to the dreary Aber-gwesyn country.

The population of the village is about eight hundred and fifty, but in the summer months, thousands of people enjoy here a very profitable holiday. For the pleasure of visitors, a pretty artificial lake has been made just below the railway station, on the grounds of the Abernant Farm.

As we travel from Builth Road Junction by the L. & N.W. Railway to Llanwrtyd Wells, the country generally, including the slopes of the Epynt, on the left, appears bleak and marshy, while on the right, the landscape is more varied, with hill, woodlands, and cornfields.

The well was discovered in 1732 by the Rev. Theophilus Evans, Vicar of Llangammarch, and grandfather of the Historian of Breconshire, Mr. Theophilus Jones. The waters run over a rich bed of sulphur, and have the properties of that substance in a high degree. It is as soft as milk, and is not at all offensive to the smell, but clear and agree-

able to the taste. Those capable of speaking of its properties, say that it is inferior to none of its kind in Europe. For skin troubles and for purifying the blood, it is an excellent remedy. The spring never loses its taste or smell, and is not affected directly by rain even in the wettest season.

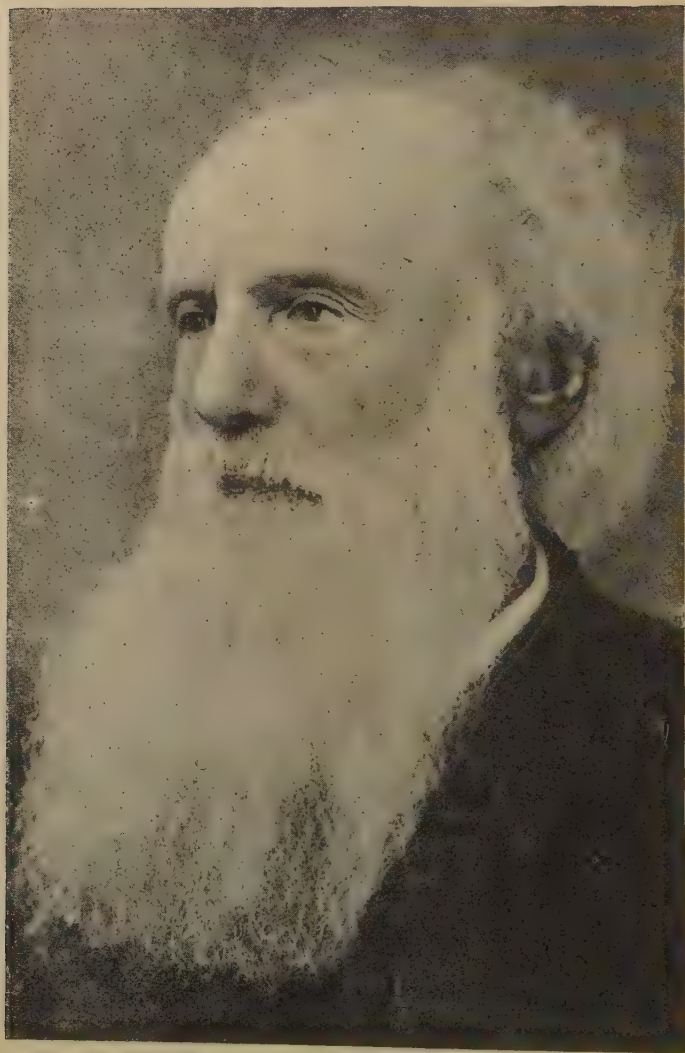
The Rev. Theophilus Evans says, that being very much troubled by scurvy, and several doctors having failed to cure the disease for him, he became alarmed at his condition, for he had now suffered many years and was getting desperate. However, one day he was told of a "stinking" well at Llanwrtyd, and out of curiosity, he decided to try it. He took the water daily, for about two months, and also washed his body in it—and was perfectly cured, never more to be troubled by the disease. There is also a small *chalybeate* (or iron water) spring close by.

Thousands of persons have benefited by the use of these waters.

There is an arrangement made, by which the gas, sulphuretted hydrogen—a gas smelling very much like rotten eggs—is confined over the waters as they rise, and this adds much to the value and sparkling quality of the water. One writer describes the village of Llanwrtyd thus: "Llanwrtyd is a pleasant village about six hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level, struggling along the banks of the Irfon to Dolycoed, where the wells are. Here the valley narrows, the hill-sides grow steep, and a most picturesque road leads along the stream to the lonely little hamlet of Abergwesyn, about five miles and a half from Llanwrtyd."

The following elements are in the waters: Potassium, Sodium, Magnesium, Calcium, Sulphuretted Hydrogen, &c.

The situation of the Church of Llanwrtyd in the Vale of Irfon charmed the "Philosopher of Llanwrtyd," the Rev. J. Kilsby Jones, who writes thus of it:—



REV. J. KILSBY JONES.

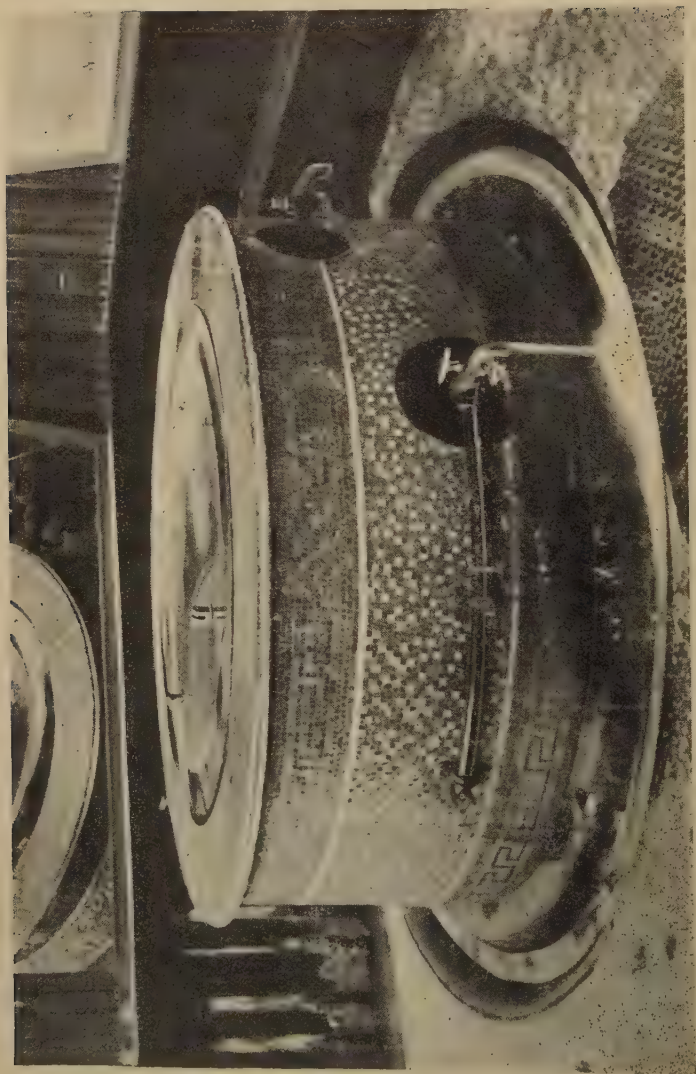
“ Nothing can be more exquisitely beautiful than the site on which it stands. Above it, is the oak-encircled hill, and at its foot, glides the Irfon. The sighing of the wind in the wood hard by, and the murmur of the river below, are music to him who is blessed with the quick ear of a true lover of nature. It is a sweet place for the weary to have rest.”

Inside, there is an inscription which deserves to be read, because it contains a brief account of a noble, daring, dashing, enterprising, successful man of the world :—

“ Sacred to the memory of John Lloyd, eldest son of Rees Lloyd, of Dinas, and captain of the East India Company's ship, *Manship*, who left his native parish at the age of sixteen years without friends or interest. After thirty-two years of active naval service, and twelve voyages to India (in the course of which he twice suffered shipwreck, and a cruel imprisonment), he returned, and greatly assisted in improving his native country. He died in February, 1818, aged seventy years.”

In the churchyard now, also lie the remains of Kilsby Jones himself, whose lonely home stands just within a stone's throw, across the river, on the rocky sides of the hill, and is surrounded with trees. He had breathed the wild breezes of these rugged scenes of nature, and loved the craggy hills and lonely vales so much, that it was his soul's delight to speak of these natural beauties. His own description of the Vale of Irfon and the solitary glens is so beautiful that we give some of it :—

“ I have seen this valley at peep of day, when nothing broke its silence save the music of the birds and the bleating of those pretty mountain sheep, which speckle its gorse coloured slopes. I have seen it at eventide, when the sun mellows the Garn with its departing light ; and I have watched



SULPHUR WELL, LLANWRTYD.

the coming on of night, until every object has at length lain in utter darkness. I have seen it in summer, when the woods are clad in their new livery of green, and the valley is covered with grass and corn.

“I have seen the woods in the autumn, with all the tints of the rainbow; and the hill-sides are brown with the decaying ferns. I have seen it during a thunderstorm, when the roar of heaven’s artillery was absolutely deafening; with the terrible forked-lightning threatening every moment to scorch the whole district, and rend the mountains into gaping gulfs. The echoes of the thunder among these mountains is grandly terrible.

“I have seen it on a stormy day, when the hurricane has been let loose and the windows of heaven flung wide open, as if again to deluge the earth. The roaring of the wind in Dinas Wood, the rolling of the flooded Irfon over its stony bed, and the thundering of the various gorges, gave me nature’s grand instrumental music. I have seen it in bleak winter, when every object looms through the driven snow, and one feels that silence, like that of death, steals around him. Beautiful beyond words, appear these mountains clad in their mantle of snow. Lonely Vale of Irfon, thou birth-place and resting-place of my humble forefathers, wisely and not too well, have I loved thee. Thou hast been my thought by day and my dream at night. It was my deepest wish to close my life in thy bosom. I can pray with Wordsworth: ‘Thou valley embrace me, and ye mountains shut me in.’”

There is here a network of glens; there is here cloud scenery. On a windy day what a race there is: the dark clouds flying over the sides and mountain tops with a speed that make you think there is in some distant spot a great meeting, and they are hurrying to get there in time. On the

other hand, when the wind is in a fitful mood, the clouds trail lazily along the hills, and even seem to nod and sleep on the way.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

ABERGWESYN.

The angler, sportsman, and tourist, get an excellent time here. It is called a village, but it consists only of the Grouse Inn, a church, a chapel, and a few scattered cottages. It is lonely beyond description. Passing the inn along the banks of the Irfon, we are in the presence of the solitary hills and yawning ravines. Fourteen miles along this rocky road will bring us to Tregaron.

It is one of the rainiest places in the county; in one year two hundred and thirty five rainy days were noticed.

The immortal William Williams, Pantycelyn, was, in 1740, a curate of Llanwrtyd and Abergwesyn. A few years after, he heard Howell Harris preach in Talgarth Churchyard, and from that day he joined Harris in his revival work.

LLANWRTHWL.

This parish extends to the boundary of Breconshire on the north and north-east. At one point, it almost reaches Montgomeryshire. The Elan and Wye Rivers form its limits. The village of Llanwrthwl is the most northerly in the county, and stands in Lat. 52deg. 20m. and Long. 3d. 22m. A great part of the district around, consists of lofty hills and commons. Coming down from the mountains, we notice that the soil improves very much, and fertile meadows and rich farm lands adorn the banks of the rivers.

LLANAVAN VAWR.

Llanavan full of hills, whose plains
Are trod by none but idle swains;
On high grey rocks and heath are found;
Below thick brakes conceal the ground.

The appearance of the surface is very uneven, and can be compared to the surface of the sea on a stormy day if it were then suddenly frozen. There is a legend about the Lord of Radnor, who turned his hounds into the church over night, and he himself slept there, with the result that the dogs went mad and their master blind by the following morning. Giraldus Cambrensis relates this incident as a miracle wrought to punish the sinner for profaning a holy place. Lord Radnor afterwards went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and his sight returned. Some years after this, he fell in battle fighting against the enemies of the Christian faith.

Much of the parish is composed of wet moors, and just below the surface we come to a rocky and shaly substance, which does not form a suitable foundation for good crops. The land is full of small streams, along whose banks are some very pretty spots.

LLANFIHANGEL BRYN PABUAN.

Pabuan is said to be derived from the Welsh Pab Ioan (John the Pope). Bryn means hill. The parish is about five miles and a half to the north-west of Builth. It is a hilly district, and is surrounded almost by the River Wye and the fine trout stream Whefri, for it is said, that the trout of the Whefri are finer than those of the Wye. During the Civil War of Charles I., this parish was the scene of very bitter conflicts between the two sides. The church was made into a stable, the font was used as a trough, and the parson was driven from his living.



EGLWYS OEN DUW, NEAR BEULAH.

Park-ar-Irfon, just at the junction of Whefri and Irfon, was a stately mansion, the residence of a noted old family—the Lloyds of Rhosferig—who were descendants of Elystan “Glodrydd” (the famous), Prince of Ferlys. Close by, are three mineral springs, with three different kinds of water, namely, saline, sulphur, and chalybeate. They are called the Park Wells, and thousands of people visit them annually. From the town of Builth they are about one mile distant, and are reached by the road round the main Irfon Bridge, or by a path leading to the swing-bridge, which was given to the town by the late Sir Joseph Bailey, M.P.

The sulphur waters obtain their solid material from the decomposition of sulphuret of iron which is very abundant in the earth in and around the neighbourhood.

The sulphur waters of Builth are referred to as early as 1740. Chemists, after analysing them, say that they possess double the strength of those at Llandrindod, and ought to possess superior virtues. There are other sulphur wells, “The Glanne,” on the western side of the town, on the Cefnybedd road. The Park Well saline waters are quite the best of their kind in the kingdom. They contain barium chloride, which is a good remedy for heart, kidney and gout troubles.

LLANGANTEN.

Separated by the Whefri (or Chwefri) from the last parish is that of Llanganten, which is famous as containing the fatal spot where the brave Llewelyn was killed. Cwm Llewelyn (Llewelyn’s dingle) is named after the hero, and Cefnybedd, close by, marks his grave.

Llanfechan and Llanlleonfel are the adjoining parishes to the west along the banks of the Irfon.

LLANLLEONFEL.

The name of this parish, which lies to the north of that of Llangammarch, is very likely derived from "Sarn Lleon," a Roman road from Carmarthen to Chester. It passed through this district. The scenery is very pretty, especially around the spot where the charming little Church of Eglwys Oen Duw stands. Close by, on the east of the church, stands a steep hill, with the oak groves covering its slopes. Here can be seen the remains of an ancient British encampment—an ideal situation for a fortress. The view from the top is beautiful. At its foot is seen the River Cammarch—making its way to the Irfon through a deep wooded valley.

The favourite fifteen miles drive from Llanwrtyd round to Abergwesyn leads through this parish, and it is one of the most enjoyable features of the tourist's visit to the Spa. The Mansion of Garth, with which the name of the Gwyn family has been so long connected, is also in this parish. One member of the family became very famous as a Judge on the North Wales Circuit. The present family of Thomas, Llwynmadoc is descended from Elystan Glodrydd, Prince of Ferlys, and has been connected with the mansion for centuries.

CHAPTER XLIX.

LLANGAMMARCH.

The name Llangammarch is derived from Llan—church; St. Cammarch—a grandson of Brychan. The L. & N.W. Railway from Builth Road passes through this parish, and from the train a capital view of the natural features of the district can be obtained. The River Irfon flows almost parallel with the railway, and the banks are a model of the charming sights to be had on the greater river, the Wye. The main road from Llanwrtyd through the village of Cefn Gorwydd, overlooks the valley, and leads us through a district dotted with rich farm lands and decorated by some fine woods.

The village of Llangammarch is well known, on account of the valuable mineral springs found close by. The story of the discovery of this valuable spring is amusing. One dry summer, the bed of the River Irfon was nearly dried up. A cotter in the neighbourhood, having missed the “grunter” set out in search of it, but could for a long time find no trace of it. At last, he resolved to tramp the river bed, and, to his delight, on a Sunday morning, he found the pig cooling itself in a little pool of water, remaining in a shady nook of the river. Being thus hot and weary with his search, he noticed a spring of water coming out of the dry river bed, and he knelt down to drink.

No sooner had he swallowed one draught than (on tasting the second draught) he scattered it in all directions, and shook his head and made a very wry face, fearing, indeed, that he had swallowed poison,



LLANGAMARCH.

for the taste was so strange. Returning home with the "grunter," he told his unpleasant experience to his friends, and this led to an examination of the spring by medical men. The water was said to be like that of the Leamington Spa in England. The water is clear, of very slight saline taste, and holds but little carbonic acid in solution. Other elements in it are : Sodium, Calcium, Magnesium, Barium, &c.

The presence of Barium in the water makes it a valuable remedy for heart troubles, and many doctors send their patients here for the benefit of this special property of the waters. It is said, that there is only one other spring, and that in Germany, where the baric chloride exists in their waters.

Not only is the parish renowned for this famous spring, but its history is rich in the fame of very eminent men, who were either born here or who lived in the neighbourhood. Perhaps the first place must be given to John Penry, the Morning Star of the Reformation in Gwalia, who was born in Cefn Brith, a farmhouse on the slopes of the Epynt, about two miles from the village of Llangammarch.

James Howell, the scholar, traveller, and quaint writer, and Thomas Howell, Bishop of Bristol, were the sons of a curate of this parish.

The Rev. Theophilus Evans, the learned Vicar of Llangammarch, although not born here, spent so many years in the Hundred of Builth as to be considered one of the natives. His grandson, Theophilus Jones, the eminent historian, also lived long here. It would be difficult to find another spot in the county, that can boast of five such eminent men.

The little churchyard above the road has the honour of giving a resting place to the mortal remains of the esteemed historian and his grandfather,

EMINENT MEN OF LLANGAMMARCH PARISH.

Distinguished land, each spot each virtue fills
Thy valleys' patriots, saints adorn thy hills.

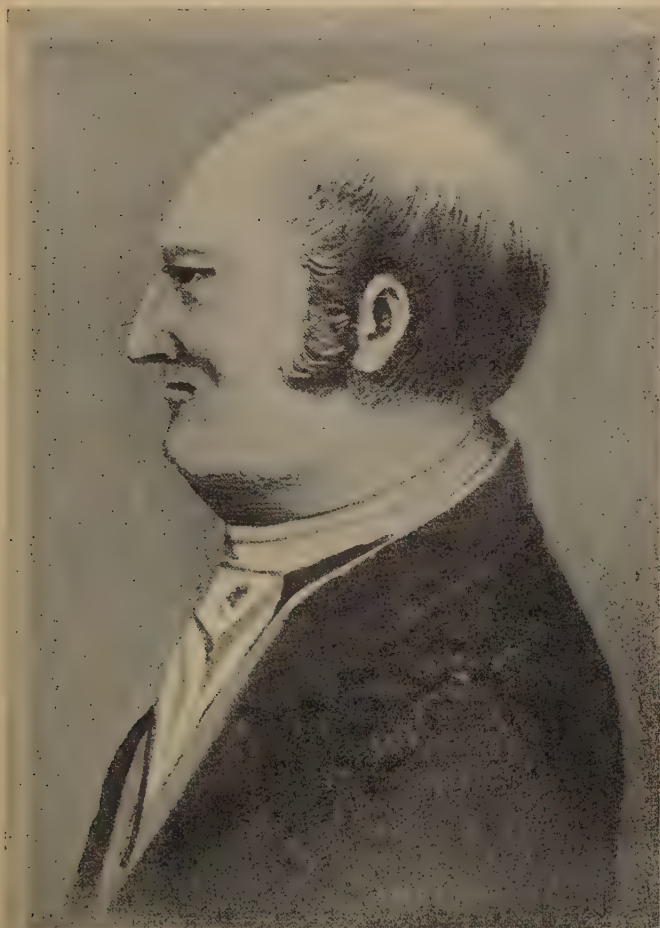
THEOPHILUS JONES, F.S.A.

“*Câs gwr nas caro'r wlad a'i maco.*”

The pleasant county of Brecknock, can well be proud of the fact, that it has given to the world three historians of no mean fame : Theophilus Jones, who wrote the History of his native county ; The Rev. Thomas Price, of Cwmdru (Carnhuanawc), who wrote “*Hanes Cymru*” (History of Wales) in Welsh ; and the Talgarth authoress, Jane Williams (Ysgafell), who wrote in English the History of Wales.

Theophilus Jones was born in Brecon, October, 18, 1759, and died in the same town, at his house in Lion Street, 15th January, 1812, aged fifty-three years. His father, the Rev. Hugh Jones, was at one time curate of St. David's Brecon, and afterwards Vicar of Llangammarch. His mother, Elinor, was the daughter of the Rev. Theophilus Evans. There does not seem to be anything unusual in the story of his youth, which was spent in the quiet and beautiful country town of Brecon.

He was well educated for years in the famous public school of Christ College, Brecon, and was intended for the profession of a lawyer. While here he met his friend—afterwards the Rev. Edward Davies, of Olveston, Gloucestershire, a learned author of important books on history. The friendship that was formed between them as boys proved to be life-long, for we find that both valued each other's respect.



The Jones

THEOPHILUS JONES,

Having completed his education at the College, he was articled to Mr. Pennoyre Watkins, a solicitor living in Brecon, and when his term was ended he took up the business of a lawyer in the town. His heart did not however seem to be in the work, and when a chance came, he gave up the "law" and accepted the position of Deputy Registrar under the Archdeacon of Brecon. He had now charge of the parish registers and other records, and soon found that his greatest delight was to read and trace the story which these could tell of the past history of men and places, and a keen desire to write the history of his native county possessed him. Such a task would require immense patience and unlimited time; but he was not afraid of hard work, neither did his great loss in money with the work interrupt him in carrying out his heart's wish.

Indeed, he made himself poor instead of rich, for had he remained a lawyer, his fortune would be much greater than it was. For in giving the world his history, he not only devoted many years of very hard labour, and spent his own money in doing the work, but he lost four hundred pounds in printing the first edition.

The Rev. Theophilus Evans, after his death, left a small estate to his grandson. The income from this and the property inherited from his father, together with his own salary, enabled Theophilus Jones to devote the best years of his life to the task. It is wonderful to think, how he chose to give all those years to this hard and patient work, rather than *make money* in another and far easier way. The useful lesson he has taught is that, after all, life does not depend upon the amount of this world's goods we possess, but rather it is an opportunity for doing good in serving our nation and our God.

We can hardly have any idea of the immense labours and the cost, the task meant for him, but he spared neither time nor expense. He personally visited every parish in the county, and was often many days from home. He copied the inscriptions on the walls and monuments, in and around the churches. The aged people were found by him, and a chat with these gave him information, which could not be obtained in any other way.

Mr. Jones was blessed with rare patience, indicated by the scores of "family tables" showing the members of the family for generations, and their relation to one another. We can imagine him with pencil and paper in hand, writing down the history of many a family, as some aged person would try to tell him. Nothing was too much trouble for him. He could take pains and go on day after day, and year after year. Although his history is perhaps not so just to some persons as we would like, we must not blame him too much; let us rather wonder, that there are no more faults in such a difficult and remarkable work.

There is also some claim to our sympathy in the defence written by his friend, the Rev. Thomas Price, Cwmdru.

Mr. Jones, whilst preparing his work for the press, was so acutely suffering from gout, that his left hand had to support the wrist of his flannel-bound right, as he guided the pen, with the tips only of his fingers at liberty. Now and then, his hand was quite screwed out of shape by the pain coming on. His life was full of hard work, carried out during years of great suffering. He loved a quiet life, and on a summer's evening he would often be seen alone fishing on the river bank.

The Rev. Theophilus Evans lived at Llwyn Einon, in Llangammarch, where afterwards his grandson spent some

of the busy years of his life. Jones, however, was only eight years old when his grandfather died. It was in the year 1800 that he decided to write the History, and by 1805 the first volume was printed. So patriotic was he, that not only was the book printed in his native county, but the paper for the work was made at the paper mills at Llangenny, near Crickhowell.

The second volume was issued in two parts in the year 1809. Most of the drawings in this volume were the work of Carnhuanawc.

After the Battle of Trafalgar several French naval officers, who were prisoners of war, were placed in Brecon. Freedom was allowed to them within certain limits. They were men of good breeding, and had been well educated. These were often welcome friends at the house of Mr. Jones, where also they met the interesting and well-spoken Carnhuanawc. This group was profitable company—as pure as it was charming. Few men were more beloved than Theophilus Jones: kind, agreeable, and good-humoured.

His house was open to a large circle of friends; his habits were plain and homely; no poor neighbour escaped his fatherly care and interest. Gout, which troubled him for many years, was also the cause of his death, which took place on January 15th, 1812. “When I am dead,” he said, “let me be buried with my grandfather, and let my inscription be ‘Here lies Theophilus Jones, the grandson of Theophilus Evans.’”

His wishes were carried out. His book is one of the most complete and well-arranged county histories in the English language. His widow erected in Christ College, Brecon, a white and grey marble tablet to his memory: “To the memory of the late Theophilus Jones, Esq., late Chapter

Clerk of this Church and Deputy Registrar of the Archdeaconry of Brecknock."

He also wrote other works, and had a very valuable library of books. His knowledge of Welsh was of real service to him in his great work, and he translated into English the Welsh book "Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsg" ("The Visions of the Sleeping Bard").

CHAPTER L.

JAMES HOWELL.

Though born at Abernant, in Carmarthenshire, this eminent man is so closely connected with Breconshire, that an account of him, may well be given under Llangammarch, where his father had been curate. From his boyhood, James was funny in his ways, and showed signs of enterprise and daring in his playing days. He went to Jesus College, Oxford, and there gave a splendid account of himself in every examination.

His career was a rather unusual one, for, having spent some years in travelling on the Continent, he became secretary to the Earl of Northumberland; and then one of the clerks of King James the First's Council; and afterwards the King's historian. This last position did not bring him a big salary, and as he was not saving in his mode of living, he took to writing books, and he wrote in all about sixty works. Some say that he spent years of his life in Fleet Street Prison, and that for debt; but it is more likely, that he was imprisoned for his support of the unfortunate Charles I.

His most popular book, and one which has got through 13 editions, is one called "Familiar Letters." The scholars of every age have always greatly praised this book, and one Bishop, an eminent man in learning, said that the "Familiar Letters" was the first book that was put into his hands by his parents. As soon as he was old enough to read such a book, it greatly charmed him.

Another rare book which he wrote, and one which shows that Howell must have been a ripe scholar, was a dictionary, each page of which had four columns for the word in four different languages—English, French, Spanish, Italian. Story books and fables also were written by him. Thackeray, the English novelist, used to say that there were two books of which he was so fond, that he always carried them with him, one of which was Howell's "Familiar Letters."

Thomas Howell, a brother of the above, was an eminent man in the Church of England. He became Doctor of Divinity, and was Chaplain to King Charles I. During the Civil War he was driven from his Canonry of Windsor by the Puritans, but later on he became Bishop of Bristol.

THEOPHILUS EVANS.

Although not a native of the county, his name is so closely connected with Llangammarch, and, indeed, with the Hundred of Builth, that some notice must be made of his history. He was born in Cardiganshire, in 1694, his father's name being Charles Evans.

Llwyneion—a farm in Llangammarch—was afterwards his home. He held several livings in the Hundred of Builth, He was Vicar of Llangammarch, and in 1739 was presented to the living of St. David's, Llanfaes. He was a busy man and among other works, we can mention the Welsh book "Drych y Prif Oesoedd" (A Mirror of Ancient Times), which is a good classical standard of pure Welsh. He also wrote many books of sermons, and was a strong champion of the simple interpretation of Bible truths. The Llanwrtyd spring will always be connected with his name, for he discovered it in 1732. He died at Brecon, 1769, and lies in the same grave as his grandson, in Llangammarch Churchyard.

CHAPTER LI.

JOHN PENRY.

The Morning Star of the Reformation in Wales

High on the slopes of the Epynt Mountains, and overlooking the pretty Vale of Dulais, and the greatest basin of the Irfon, stands an old farmhouse, called Cefn Brith, where John Penry, the "Martyr," was born in the year 1559. The tall trees around the house, and the crystal rill of water



CEFN=BRITH—BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN PENRY.

just in front of it, remain to-day just as they were when the lad John Penry spent his young days, happy as the birds in the branches above him. The scenes of his youth remain; the mountain, the stream, and the breezes as fresh to-day as ever.

His father's name was Meredith Penry, a respectable farmer of the county, belonging to one of the oldest families

in Brecknockshire. We know but very little of his youth, but at the age of nineteen we find that he went to Cambridge University. His early education, must have been of the ordinary kind to be got in those days in country places.

The times into which John Penry was born were remarkable for the conflict that was raging in England. The Protestant Reformation had been steadily spreading, and at last reached Wales. In the year 1535 Henry VIII. proclaimed himself Supreme Head of the Church of England, and thus dethroned the Pope. Following Edward VI. we have the reign of Mary, when the Catholics again asserted their power, and rivers of blood were flowing. After Mary, Queen Elizabeth waded through the blood of Catholics, and one sister was as cruel as the other; in fact, the nature of both sisters was the same. Perhaps we must not blame them too harshly, for the country could not understand how it was possible for people to live in peace under the same Government, while worshipping God in different ways.

In fact, the countries of Europe were afraid of one another, and every king did all he could to keep his people as one people, both in religion and politics.

The iron rod of the Pope, had now passed into the hand of the king, and there was no more liberty than before. The Welsh were compelled by force and persecution, to accept Protestantism.

John Penry himself was a zealous Catholic, and many a night he secretly attended the "Mass" while a student in Cambridge, which was, in those days, the home of the Puritan faith. Some of the leaders in the great struggle between the Puritans and Catholics, were Cambridge men. The noble Archbishop Grindal, Edmund Spenser, who described the struggle in his "Faery Queen," and the eminent teacher Cartwright, were friends of the Puritan faith.

John Penry, one night, instead of going to "Mass," went with some of his fellow-students to the prayer meeting, and he soon changed sides, becoming zealous for the new faith. He now read the Bible for himself, and found in it a wonderful message for his soul.

He decided to leave Cambridge in 1583, and go to Oxford University, where the Puritans found a better home for their religion. In the year 1586, some preachers who were filled with the teachings of the great reformer, John Knox, from Scotland, visited Oxford. The result was, that John Penry and others refused to be *ordained* by the Bishop of the Church of England, and so he had to preach the Gospel only by *license*. But the great desire of his heart was to bring the blessings of the Gospel to his countrymen, in his dear old Wales.

Penry, therefore, wrote a book with the object of showing to the Parliament, the great need for the Gospel in Wales, and he appealed to the English for their help, to send the Gospel and preachers to his countrymen, living in sin and darkness. He tried to show to Elizabeth and her Parliament the religious poverty of the Welsh people, and the bountiful riches of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However important were other questions before Parliament, Penry pleaded, that the cry from Wales, through him deserved their serious thought. "The Lord," he said, "through me, is knocking at the door of Parliament asking that the people of Wales shall become His own."

There were two classes—the many and the few—in Wales. The few were Christian, but the "many" were either without God, or had only some form of witchcraft or other superstition. Their daily life was disgraceful, their ordinary conversation was filthy, and "curses" and "oaths" were heard on all sides; drunkenness, theft, and all forms of sin were

rampant through the land. The law was not observed, nor honestly treated at the hands of the judges of the land.

The only hope (in John Penry's mind) of improving things, was to get an army of preachers, who could give the people the word of God in their own tongue—in the Welsh language. But the Queen desired to make England and Wales one nation, and therefore the Welsh language must be put aside. Many of the clergy in Wales, could not preach in the language of the people.

Penry had a scheme for spreading the Gospel through Wales, and it was printed in the form of a small book. Because he denounced in it, many of the defects of the Church and clergy, and said, that any layman might be allowed to preach the Gospel, the book gave great offence. The book and the author, were ordered to be seized, and John Penry was cast into prison.

John Penry and his friends now had a printing press, and we find him spending weeks writing a book, with his pitiful cry for his dear countrymen. He was secretly wandering from place to place for fear the "High Commission Court" should rob him of his press, and once more lock him up in the prison cell.

As soon as he regained his freedom, the flame burnt hotter and brighter in his heart. After leaving Oxford he joined some English Puritans, among whom were Sir Richard Knightley and Mr. Godfrey, from Northampton, whose daughter Helen he married—a brave and noble woman. She bore her trial with the patience and courage of a Christian.

He wrote one of his "Petitions" in the cottage of a poor widow in Surrey. Another appeal was sent to Parliament: "An exhortation unto the governors and people of her Majesty's country of Wales, to labour earnestly to have the preaching of the Gospel planted among them—1588."

This year, 1588, was noted for the invasion of the Spanish Armada, and also for the Welsh Bible, translated by Bishop Dr. Morgan.

The whole work of the Puritan was now looked upon, as nothing less than treason.

CHAPTER LII.

An attack had been made on the moral life of the Bishops by some unknown writer, who called himself "Martin Mar Prelate." John Penry was now suspected of being the author of these letters; but this view is not universally accepted. Penry, in his zeal, had written some strong words against the failings of the leaders of the people. He next appealed to the Parliament. In his own words he stated his case :

"The Lord, through His eternal grace, has brought me unto the light and knowledge of the saving truth of the Gospel, and for that reason, my conscience will not give me peace while looking upon the wretched state of my countrymen in Wales." His books were seized by warrant—500 of them were taken, and he himself appeared before the High Commission Court, and Whitgift himself charged him with treachery and treason. He was imprisoned. In those days to be shut in a prison cell was dreadful. Men, women, and children were huddled together, in misery and want.

The prison was alive with vermin, and the prisoners had no change of clothes, and had to lie on dirty straw. There was in winter, no fire, and no food at all, only what was sent by kind friends outside. One of the most dreadful of diseases was the jail fever. At Oxford once, when the prisoners were brought forth to the Court of Justice, this plague was

carried with them, and in forty hours three hundred persons, including the Judge and several of the lawyers, fell victims to the dread enemy and died. The prisons were indeed horrid dens of filth and disease. When a sufferer like this, he used to think of the time in the University, when he hoped the Bishops would support him in the preaching of the Gospel in Wales. But how differently it happened !

“ As soon as I am out, I must think of Wales,” said the Christian hero. Whitgift watched him, and Richard Walton, a servant of the Archbishop, entered his home in Northampton, and took his papers away. Again Penry is dragged before the High Commission Court ; and, as there was no witness against him, the prisoner according to the custom in those days, a most unfair proceeding, was made to swear that he would give evidence against himself. He appealed to Parliament against the persecution, but never turned from his course nor denied his purpose.

“ With God’s help, I intend serving the cause of my dear country as long as I live. I do not intend giving up working against those wicked people, who prevent the spreading of the truth.” Now persecution was fierce, and the noble champion had to flee for his life to Scotland. The little printing press got into the hands of his enemies, and Elizabeth now believed, that Penry’s purpose was to destroy the Government and the Church.

A warrant was issued for his arrest, and the Queen, in her own handwriting, wrote a letter to James, King of Scotland, against Penry, and the fugitive was ordered to quit the country ; but the Presbyterian ministers protected their hero. Here he came into close friendship with the followers of the mighty John Knox—the greatest of all English Reformers. Still, Penry was not at home in Scotland, his work was in

Wales. Perhaps yet, he thought it might be possible to convince the Queen, that the Church could be reformed without destroying the Government, and the Gospel preached in Wales without harm to anyone.

In September, 1592, with his wife and four little girls, he came to London, where he found a few friends, who invited him to become the pastor of their little church. This, however he refused. But it was in vain to expect peace, while among such reformers as Barrow and Greenwood in London. Having caught these two, they were taken to the gallows, and were hanged.

The shadow of the gallows was now on Penry's path. The 22nd March, 1593, the day on which Barrow was tried, he was captured. His faithful wife appealed to the Lord Keeper—Sir John Pickering, while her husband was on his trial, to be allowed to take him food while he would be imprisoned. The reply was to imprison a widow, who had accompanied Penry's wife to the Lord Keeper. On the 6th of April, he writes this letter to his wife from prison :—

“ Be faithful to the cause. Pray with thy family morning and evening. Read Psalm 37, Esaiah 60, 61, 62, 63, &c. Whatever you will do, keep our children with you, that you may yourself bring them up in the knowledge of God. I leave to you and them indeed nothing in this life, but the Lord's blessing and His blessed promise to me, poor sinner, that they may be happy on the earth. Teach them, now I beg, what I last taught them—if they would reign with Christ—they must suffer with Him also.

“ I know, my dear Helen, that the burden I leave you—four little children, the eldest not six years old—heavy in thy sight. Greet my own mother and thine, my brothers, and sisters in Wales. My desire to serve them, was great. My victory is certain through the blood of the Lamb.”

Four days after, a letter was sent to the little ones—to be kept until they were old enough to understand it :—

“ Hold fast in your faith,” he said ; “ be obedient to your dear mother, who has wandered in danger over land and sea for my sake and yours ; repay her with kindness and love. She will teach you to read : four Bibles I leave you, one each, the only fortune I have to give you. Be humble and good, my dear girls, and, when old enough, pray earnestly on the Lord to be merciful to my dear country, Wales,” &c.

CHAPTER LIII.

The ink had not dried when, in the prison, the order came that he was to appear before his accusers—the High Commission Court of the Church. Twelve others were in the room waiting to be tried. Penry’s turn came.

The Church Commission were only able to inflict a fine or to imprison. While in Scotland, Penry was arrested before he had finished a letter to the Queen of England, declaring his loyalty to her throne—a letter which no one saw but his accusers,—on a charge of seditious writing. His friends had written a strong defence on his behalf, urging that, according to the law, he could not be condemned.

May 21, 1593, saw him again on his trial before three judges and a London jury, on a charge of high treason under a statute of Queen Elizabeth. He was found guilty and condemned to die. Once more the brave prisoner wrote letters to Cecil—the Prime Minister—letters which, perhaps, are the most touching of all his writings, in which he repeats his burning zeal for preaching the Gospel in Wales, and bewails his fate of being ushered to the gallows as a traitor to his Queen.

The 25th May was the fatal day—sentence of death was passed. On the morrow he sent to Cecil his last confession—that of a young man craving for the chance of giving to his dear countrymen the Gospel of Christ, and, with the voice of a dying man, declaring his loyalty to the throne. On the 29th the warrant was signed. At his dinner, Penry was told, that at four o'clock that afternoon he was to die. On the road to Kent, about two miles, in a lonely spot by the side of a stream, the gallows was fixed, and there he was taken on this beautiful sunny May afternoon.

We can only imagine what it must be to a young man, thirty-four years old, to die in the midst of strangers, the birds twittering above, the flowers smiling at his feet, and the water of the brook babbling by; yea, to die in silence, for he was not allowed to say one word more! His family and friends knew not of the tragedy, and no one, but the Master whom he tried to serve so bravely, knows where his body lies.

It is unfortunate that Penry's fervent and overwhelming zeal for religion should have brought him into conflict with the civil authorities. In judging his life and end, we must bear in mind that trials were conducted in a very different manner from what they are now. The critical state of affairs, and the disloyalty rampant at the time, rendered those in authority suspicious of any action which was in the smallest degree likely to endanger the safety of the Crown, and perhaps tended to influence juries against anyone who was charged, as Penry was, with sedition.

Then, too, the position of the Archbishop, as a chief member of the Privy Council, lent an appearance of religious persecution to what was merely a criminal trial. It is

difficult to realise nowadays that the chief religious authority in the State had also (as a leading adviser of the Sovereign in civil matters) to take a prominent part in such prosecutions, or to expect, human nature being what it is, that he could entirely forget the insults that had been offered to him, and his brother bishops.

In these modern days such a state of things would be impossible, a further trial would have been obtained, the verdict might have been different, and no grounds would have been afforded for any suspicion of religious persecution in the affair.

As it was, Penry and Whitgift, from their respective points of view, each thought that they were doing their duty, and impartial readers of history must be left to draw their own conclusions of the merits of the case, bearing in mind how different things were done then from now.

CHAPTER LIV.

DAVID WILLIAMS.

“The Patriarch of Wales.”

Near Llanwrtyd, in one of its rugged glens, stood a small farmhouse called Nant-y-dderwen, occupied by a farmer and his wife, Rees and Margaret Williams—pious folk and hard-working.



D. WILLIAMS.

On the 27th January, 1779, their eldest son David was born, who afterwards became, in many respects, one of the most remarkable men of the county. Before he was two years old his parents removed to another farm a few miles away, called Bonygroes, near the Llanwrtyd Church. Three lads were now playmates—David Williams, Evan Harris,

and William Harris (two brothers)—in the village. Their pet game was to “preach” in turns, while the other two formed the congregation. A big stone, or a tree, would be the pulpit, and it is interesting and striking to say, that the three lads became in their day preachers of some fame, one with the Congregationalists, another with the Methodists, and the third with the Baptists. Is it not true, too, that, as with the poet, “The preacher is born, not made.”

One of the earliest recollections David had of his home, was the family worship, when his mother taught him to kneel at the bench in the kitchen, while the father led them in prayer. Thus the lad was, from the beginning, taught to look upon God, as one who had some great secret and ruling power in the life of the home. It seemed that David, when about seven years old, realized deeply the fact, that God was always watching over his movements, and this kept him from joining other lads in some wicked childish games.

He was sent to a day-school held in the Church (Llanwrtyd) close by, carried on by the clergyman, the Rev. Morgan Jones, a very good man, and much respected in the neighbourhood. This was the only school he ever attended, but he learnt here, the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, such as to enable him in after years to improve himself by his own efforts. It was, however, time, when about twelve years of age, to think of some employment, and although his parents wished him to become a “weaver,” like his father and grandfather, he decided that nothing but the trade of a “shoemaker” would satisfy him.

David was therefore apprenticed for three years to the best ‘shoemaker’ in the neighbourhood—one Rhys Jones—and the lad resolved to master all the branches of the craft thoroughly. During these years he impressed the people of the neighbourhood by his deeply religious life and Christian character.

In order to gain more experience, and to get into a larger sphere, he moved to Llandovery, where he, however, remained only about a year. He had heard of the great advantages that Merthyr Tydfil would afford to a young man anxious to improve himself. He therefore left Llandovery at about sixteen years of age, and set out to walk with his little *pack* on his shoulder to that great town.

His friends were alarmed to think that he ventured to such a place, for country folk thought that Merthyr was the refuge of every class of evil-doers, who fled from the "Policeman."

Many a country lad, on going from home to a big town, has drifted away with evil companions into a wicked, fast life often leading to ruin, but David Williams made the best use of his time in reading books, &c. After a few years we find him back once more in his native place near Llanwrtyd. Here, with his parents, he settled down as a "shoemaker." The home now was a busy place. There was a mill for grinding corn, a spinning-wheel, &c., for weaving, and to these was added the "cobbler's shop."

On his departure from Merthyr, he took home with him two very curious articles, a tea-kettle and a tea-pot, which he presented to his mother. Tea, in those days, was too dear for ordinary people to enjoy, and it was looked upon almost as a disgraceful thing to indulge in a "cup of tea." Many families, therefore, were careful to do so in secret. After returning home, it was clear, that David intended some day to do something else than to sit at the "cobbler's last." He had now fully determined to be a preacher of the Gospel.

The opportunity came unexpectedly, for he was called upon to take the service and preach a sermon on Sunday, as the expected minister had not arrived. Although he was

not quite prepared for this when the chance came, he had to do the best he could. David was now about twenty years of age. For over seventy years after this, almost without a break, he preached every Sunday, and on many other occasions. Indeed, it is probable, that no other man in the whole history of Wales preached so many times during his life as the "Patriarch."

In the year 1803, Williams was ordained as a minister to the Churches of Troedrhiwdalar and Llanwrtyd, and thought himself to be passing rich at "£20 a year." After the death of his aged master, the Rev. Isaac Price, Llanwrtyd, he undertook the full charge of the churches—a position which he held until 1866. On the 27th August, 1874, at the advanced age of over ninety-five years, he died.

Physically, he was an extraordinary man, and lived during the reign of the four Sovereigns—George III., George IV., William IV., and Queen Victoria. His salary never exceeded the modest sum of forty pounds per year; but the fruits of an industrious and thrifty life, enabled him to purchase a small farm. While he devoted himself entirely to the duties of his ministry, his wife managed the farm work. As a preacher, he was so popular, that his services were in great demand in all parts of his native Wales, and even in London and some English towns where Welsh churches existed.

There seemed to be no limits to his power to bear the strain of preaching and riding, for he often would travel from Anglesey to Pembrokeshire, and thence to Glamorgan, riding on his grand little Welsh steed by day and by night. It is said, that ten years of his long life were spent in the saddle. One morning, he started from Troedrhiwdalar to attend a public meeting in Cardiganshire at noon; and he did it.

Indeed it was said that he would go thirty-five miles with twopennyworth of hard ginger-bread in his pocket. At a jubilee service in Troedrhiwdalar, on presenting Mr. Williams with a gift of books, a member said, that during the fifty years, in which there were over two thousand six hundred Sundays, he was never missed once in his pulpit. He possessed a fine Welsh build for wear and tear, short of stature, but a chest "made for a blacksmith on grand occasions"; fine voice, very fiery eloquence, and full of life and activity, and smart in his gait.

He was naturally gifted with a fine intellect, and his heart was burning with passion, while preaching the Gospel of Christ. On one occasion, a very few months before his death, Mr. Williams went up to London to preach. He did not leave his native hills till Saturday, preached in the Metropolis three times on the Sunday; twice on Monday, and was back at Troedrhiwdalar on Tuesday, and this, too, at the age of ninety-five years! He was sixty-six years pastor of the same congregation.

In the graveyard of Troedrhiwdalar Chapel can be seen to-day the monument to his memory, inscribed as follows:—"In loving memory of the Rev. D. Williams. Born January 27, 1779; died August 20, 1874. Ordained Pastor of the Churches of Llanwrtyd and Troedrhiwdalar August 3, 1803." Through his exertions eight places of worship were built and rebuilt. He was possessed of a hardy, well-knit frame, highly mercurial temperament, and an affectionate disposition.

As a preacher, he was distinguished for a rich, melodious voice, and a resistless flow of impassioned eloquence; and as a minister for apostolical zeal and labours, purity of life and undivided devotedness to the objects of his sacred calling.



BUILT WELLS FROM LLANELWEDD ROCKS

BUILT WELLS, FROM LLANELWEDD ROCKS.

THE TOWN OF BUILTH.

Builth, with a population of about 1,850, stands on the right bank of the Wye, in the midst of a district considered one of the most charming in the county. The town is situated in Lat. 52 degrees N., and Long. 3 degrees W. at an elevation of four hundred and thirty feet above the sea-level, and is fifteen miles due north from the town of Brecon. Lofty hills surround it on the south and west, and the beauty of the district is completed by the wooded uplands and the silvery waters of the Irfon and Wye.

The scenery surrounding Builth is very attractive, and teems with a rare variety of woods, knolls, hills, and streams. The sportive Wye, still but a child, has all the charms of its infancy : at times, still and sedate, at others it rushes along, or plays among rocks of all sizes and beauty, forming numerous eddies, pools, and cascades ; or it spreads out widely in sparkling shallows, adorned here and there with the rich foliage of the trees overhanging its waters.

On the south, the town is bounded by a spur of the Epynt, on the east the Garth Mountains and the pasture lands of Radnorshire. On the north, the famed Llanelwedd and Penmaenau Rocks stand like faithful sentinels to break the force of the northern blasts ; while the cultivated fields and fine plantations of Llanelwedd Hall and Wellfield seem to rejoice in their protection. The romantic Wye completes the picture.

The town's Welsh name, Bualt, is derived from bu—an ox, and allt—a wooded eminence, signifying " the wooded hill of the ox." The old name of the place is Llanfair-yn-Muallt, and the neighbourhood was famous as a great grazing district. In the year 893 A.D. the town suffered much

from the invasion of the Danes, who, being pressed by Alfred, King of England, sailed to Wales. After destroying the country round the coast, they advanced to Builth, and destroyed it. The great plague of the 14th century is said to have visited the place, and caused terrible loss of life.

In December, 1691, a fire almost destroyed the town. The dwelling-houses of forty-one families, with all their corn, furniture, and goods, were burnt down, causing damage to the value of £12,000. Some hundreds of pounds were collected to relieve the distress.

Builth is one of the most popular of the Welsh Spas. The crowds of tourists in summer, hailing from the towns of Glamorganshire and other places, give it a bright and busy aspect. The sons of toil meet here for health and pleasure, and the hills resound with song.

THE WELLS.

Stranger! does sickness waste thee
With slow or swift decay?
Haste to our waters, haste thee,
And quaff thy ills away.

Thy spirit may be broken
With anguish of the soul;
But, ah! our scenes have beauties,
Again shall make thee whole.

Here all the charms of nature,
And gift of health appear,
To soothe each mortal ailing;
Then stranger haste thee here.

Nor you, ye gay and lovely,
Refuse to seek our shrine;
For here the blithe and beauteous
Will add their charms to thine.

A pearl lies in our waters
Of richer, prouder wealth
Than Cleopatra swallowed—
The precious pearl of *Health*.



THE GLANNE WELLS PUMP-ROOMS, BUILTH WELLS.



THE PARK WELLS PUMP-ROOM, BUILTH WELLS.

The *Wells* are three very valuable springs, which combine the properties of those at Llandrindod and Llanwrtyd, namely, saline, chalybeate, and sulphur waters. It is said that a party of mowers, being thirsty, drank of the first waters they came to, and, tasting it brackish, soon told their friends. These waters form a streamlet after passing the pump-room, and are called Nant-yr-halen, or the Salt-brook. "Up with the lark, and away to the Wells," is the visitor's watchword.

Taking Llanwrtyd road for our morning walk, we go along Love Lane, where the violet, primrose, dog-rose and hawthorn waft their incense on the breeze. Passing this lane, we come to the curious Suspension Bridge, which here spans that beautiful stream the Irfon, just above its junction with the majestic Wye. This bridge, one hundred feet in length, is the gift of the late Sir Joseph Bailey, M.P., to the inhabitants of Builth and its numerous visitors. Take your stand on the bridge (if your head does not turn), and a beautiful view of the Buallt country will charm the eye.

It is no small task to cross this swing bridge—you do two things at once, walk and ride. It is almost too much for timid maidens, and much fun is enjoyed by the party around seeing their friends swing to and fro above the stream below. There are two other walks, that might be taken from the town to the Wells—one along the Wye, and the other called The Drive, which passes on to the Irfon bridge, crosses the Whefri, and comes by the farmhouse called the Park Farm House.

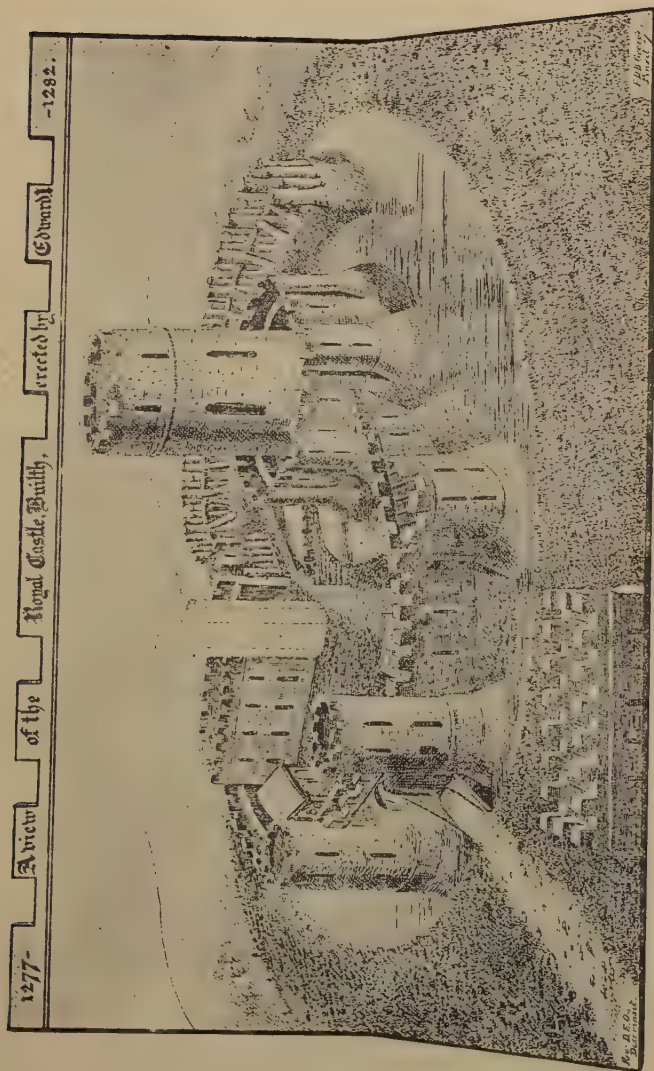
The Wells stand amidst pretty woods. Eminent doctors declare these waters to be very strong in healing powers, and among the most valuable in the country.

Not only are the "Wells" of interest in this neighbourhood, but anglers get here a rare time, for the rivers abound in salmon, trout, and pike.

Away to the brook
All your tackle outlook
Here's a day that is worth a day's wishing,
See that all things be right
For 'twould be a spite
To want tools when a man goes a-fishing.

Your rod with tops two,
For the same will not do,
If your manner of angling you vary;
And full you may think,
If you troll with a pink,
One too weak will be apt to mis-carry.

Then basket neat made
By a master in's trade,
In a belt at your shoulder must dangle:
For none e'er was so vain
To wear this in distain,
Who a true brother was of the angle.



BUILTH CASTLE.

CHAPTER LV.

BUILTH CASTLE.

This old monument of the past, with which is connected the greatest event in the history of the county, stands at the east end of the town. Here, the struggle for Welsh independence ended, for not far from this spot Llewelyn, the brave Welsh Prince, met his death. The place where he was slain is in the parish of Llanganten, two miles west of the town, and is known as Cwm Llewelyn, or Llewelyn's dingle. His body was interred at a cross-road, but now a farmhouse is built on the supposed grave, and the house is called Cefn-y-bedd Prince Llewelyn.

The ruins of the castle are now only a wall facing the north, and the ground attached to it is not much above an acre. The site of the keep was about fifty yards in circumference; round it was a ditch, and on the south side were two trenches, through which a gap was cut to introduce water into them. There were two entrances into it, one on the north and the other on the south side. It is very probable that the old bridge over the Wye was lower than the present one, and was opposite the castle. It is not known when, or by whom the castle was destroyed.

The Castle was probably built by Bernard Newmarch, who had married Nest, the granddaughter of Gruffydd ap Llewelyn, Prince of North Wales. For some time the castle was in the hands of the Welsh, but after years of conflict the English regained it, and Edward I. appointed John Giffard as governor.

In the reign of Edward II., however, it was held by Roger Mortimer, the Earl of Wigmore. The Crown retained it until the death of Charles I. Since then the castle and manor have passed through various private hands.

When Llewelyn, the last Prince of Wales, sought shelter in it from his enemies, he was refused help, and this conduct of the garrison gave them the hateful name of the "Traitors of Builth"—"Bradwyr Buallt." A fuller account of this is given in the tragic death of the brave Prince.

Four miles from Builth is the romantic and interesting village of Aberedw, no doubt one of the most beautiful spots in the Principality. The River Edwy here descends through a deep valley towards its junction with the Wye, and near the meeting of the waters, its channel is confined by lofty walls of rock, often broken into picturesque crags.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE OLD IRONWORKS OF BRECONSHIRE.

At one time there were several furnaces and forges in active operation throughout the county, but to-day ruins and old castings remain only, pointing to the scenes of industry in former days. Now all is silent.

Signs are to be seen at Brecon, and also at Pipton, near Glasbury, of an old furnace and forge. These were probably founded in 1720-1723 by two gentlemen, whose names were Benjamin Tanner, of the town of Brecon, ironmonger; and Richard Wellington, of Hay, who owned Hay Castle.



FORGE LANE, NEAR BRECON.

The dates on the cast iron in the building are 1722 and 1723. These massive castings were, no doubt, brought from the old works, either of Ynyscedwin, Llangrwyney, or Clydach, along the road, or in barges, on the river.

The Brecon furnace, also called the Honddu furnace, is situated on that river, about a mile from the town, and was erected on the site of an old corn-mill.

Both the Pipton forge, on the Llyfni, and that on the Honddu, were placed by those rivers in order to make use of the water power. Very large bellows had to be used to supply the strong blast of air necessary for creating sufficient heat to melt the ore, and water power was therefore needed for the working of these immense bellows.

The iron-ore and limestone were conveyed on the backs of horses and mules from the open patch workings at Hirwain, eighteen miles away; and the wood was carried over the Epynt Mountains from the woods of Cwmdwr Valley, Llangammarch, and Llanwrtyd.

The manufactured iron was probably conveyed in barges down the Wye (which is navigable to Hay), and thence to Chepstow, and on to the Bristol merchants. At that time iron was twenty pounds per ton.

These ironworks (Pipton and Honddu) passed through the hands of several owners, and in 1753 we find Thomas Maybery buying the interests of these works for four hundred pounds. In 1760 hundreds of tons were supplied to H.M. Army and Navy, and on the same date (1760) John Maybery and the Wilkins' leased the mineral property at Hirwain from the Dowager Lady Windsor.

These then were worked together with the Brecon and Pipton furnaces. However, as the Hirwain works supplied sufficient iron, the other two fell into disuse. The merchant iron, turned out when charcoal only was used at the furnace and in the forge, must have been of the purest and finest kind. When heating the furnace, the cordwood would first be used, with the ironstone and limestone.

THE HIRWAIN IRONWORKS.

These are found in the parish of Penderyn, which is about twelve hundred feet above the sea-level. The owner of these was John Maybery, who decided to carry them on in that place because a supply of iron-ore, coal, and limestone was close at hand.

These works, under Mr. John Maybery's management rapidly developed and proved profitable, and we find in 1864 that Maybery and company also opened works at Tredegar, The Hirwain works passed through the hands of John Ware, of Stafford, and William King, of Bristol, and were supposed to supply three hundred tons of dark-grey pig-iron at four pounds per ton.

Walter Wilkins, who went to India in 1789, together with his brothers and others, formed in 1778 what was known as Wilkins's Old Bank, Brecon.

The Maybery and Wilkins' family granted a lease of the works to the great ironmaster Anthony Bacon, of Cyfarthfa.

John Maybery, a man of eminent character and ability, will ever rank as one of the very first pioneers of industry in South Wales.

The Crawshays also at one time owed the Hirwain works, and enlarged and repaired them considerably. These have now for many years been in ruins after a history of a century of good and bad times.

THE BEAUFORT IRONWORKS.

The man who first established these works in 1779 was Edward Kendall, J.P., High Sheriff of Breconshire. He resided at Danypark, on the Usk, at Crickhowell. He seems to have been a very able public man, who gave much of his time to matters pertaining to the county of Brecon. He married a widow lady, Mrs. Bevan, of Crickhowell.

The lands were leased from Henry Duke of Beaufort, and among the terms of the agreement were that of paying to the Duke three hundred horse-loads of coal at the pit's mouth every year.

Beaufort receives its Welsh name, "Cendl," after the above Edward Kendall. The iron was taken down the Ebbw Valley to the Monmouthshire Canal at Crumlin.

On the 25th of March, 1833, these works passed into the hands of Joseph and Crawshay Bailey, the price paid being £45,000. In 1816, 3,164 tons of iron for shipment were sent down the Monmouthshire Canal.

THE BLACK BAND OF BEAUFORT.

This is a thin vein of crumbling grit, partly of particles of coal and partly iron-ore intermixed. Hence can be accounted the unsightly, desolate shale heaps up the Clydach Valley. The natural soil seems to have been washed away in millions of tons down the precipitous Clydach Valley to the Usk, and thence to the Bristol Channel.

THE BRECON BOAT COMPANY.

This company leased from Messrs. Kendall some good veins of coal, and a short, but steep, railroad of four miles took the loaded trams down the Clydach Valley from the mouths of the levels to the wharves at Llanelly, and then a fleet of sixteen canal-boats of twenty-one tons burden conveyed the coal to Brecon, eighteen miles away.

The countryside came here for their coal and also lime, for this company possessed large limestone quarries and kilns along the hillside of Llangattock and Brynmawr Mountain.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE CLYDACH IRONWORKS.

These were a branch of the Beaufort works, and were not profitable working for a long time, for we find one of the company had to sell the old family mansion of Watton Mount, in Brecon, in order to meet the demands for the repayment of a heavy loan made for the works.

There were several causes that brought about the failure of these works. Among the causes may be mentioned, borrowed capital, and the costly carriage of coal and iron-ore, down endless and expensive inclines to the canal at the bottom of the valley.

The supply of coal of good quality was also short, and the quality of iron so inferior, that it was difficult to sell. Mr. E. Frere was a manager and also owner of these works, and Sir Bartle Frere, the famous military commander, was born near these works.

On July 17th, 1833, the whole of the Clydach Ironworks were put up for sale. They then consisted of three blast furnaces, twenty-six coke ovens, &c., and a rolling mill. There was no buyer, and the property remained in the hands of Mr. John Powell, Brecon. In the year 1840 there were 10,038 tons of iron shipped at Newport from the works.

THE LLANELLY OR CLYDACH FORGE.

This is situated on the Clydach stream, and was built in 1680 by the Hanbury and Leigh family. It was erected there for the sake of the great and constant water power

of the Clydach stream. Mules were employed to carry charcoal from the farms of Llangattock and district. About 1861 it seems to have stopped owing to the same causes as those affecting the Clydach works.

THE LLANGRWYNEY FORGE.

These works are of very ancient date, being built about 1720, the same time as the forge of Brecon. They were situated at the mouth of the Grwyney brook, which rises in the Black Mountains, on the borders of Herefordshire, and flows into the Usk, on the left bank, about two miles from Crickhowell. It is said that in this neighbourhood, and nowhere else in Breconshire, is the nightingale to be heard.

On the old site of the works are now paper-mills, owned by Mr. Beckwith.

The Brecon and Abergavenny Canal was built in 1792, and in 1794 the Canal Company built at Llangrwyney a bridge over the Usk, but the floods carried it away. The present bridge is of iron and is private property. A toll is charged for crossing it.



MAP OF BRECONSHIRE.
(Shewing the Chief Divisions or "Hundreds.")

